STATE LIBRARY
THE UNION
SALEM, OREGON

DISCARD

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_S0-EAO-407

By Henry D. Sedgwick

THE NEW AMERICAN TYPE. Crown 8vo, $1.50 *net*. Postage extra.

A SHORT HISTORY OF ITALY. With Maps. Crown 8vo, $2.00 *net*. Postage 17 cents.

FRANCIS PARKMAN. 16mo, $1.10 *net*. Postage 10 cents. *In American Men of Letters Series.*

ESSAYS ON GREAT WRITERS. Crown 8vo, gilt top, $1.50 *net*. Postage, 13 cents.

SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN. Small 16mo, 65 cents *net*. Postage, 6 cents. *In Riverside Biographical Series.*

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK

THE NEW AMERICAN TYPE AND OTHER ESSAYS

THE NEW AMERICAN TYPE AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY

HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

Pierce Library
Eastern Oregon University
1410 L Avenue
La Grande, OR 97850
WITHDRAWN
From EOU Libraries

COPYRIGHT 1908 BY HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Published April 1908

To

S. S. M.

AMICAE MIRABILI

MATRI ADMIRABILI

SOCRUI INCOMPARABILI

Sedgwick, Henry Dwight. The new American type, and other essays. Bost. Houghton (Ap) 1908. 343p. **$1.50 net.

Contents. The new American type — The mob spirit in literature — Mrs. Wharton — Certain aspects of America — Exile — Charles Russell Lowell — American colleges — A gap in education — Miss Anne Douglas Sedgwick — Nations and the decalogue — Mark Twain — The coup d'état of 1961.

Twelve essays of popular character and more than ordinary charm, half serious, half humorous. They touch upon four typical Americans indicated in subject headings given below, and upon various types and traits of the time. The book is of temporary interest, and is therefore for those libraries that can afford collections of modern essays.

814 Wharton, *Mrs* Edith, 1862– ‖ Lowell, Charles Russell, 1835–1864 ‖ Sedgwick, Anne Douglas, 1873– ‖ Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 1835– ‖ Sexual ethics 8–12605/7

CONTENTS

The New American Type 1

The Mob Spirit in Literature 25

Mrs. Wharton 51

Certain Aspects of America 97

Exile 125

Charles Russell Lowell 147

American Colleges 161

A Gap in Education 189

Miss Anne Douglas Sedgwick 205

Nations and the Decalogue 247

Mark Twain 279

The Coup d'État of 1961 315

THE NEW AMERICAN TYPE

THE NEW AMERICAN TYPE

Not very long ago there was an exhibition of portraits in New York of unusual interest. In the first place, as the great sign over the entrance averred, the portraits were "worth millions;" in addition to this cynosural quality, some of them were painted by very famous painters. A third reason, neither practical nor artistic, must serve as the excuse for this little essay. The collection included portraits old and new; most of the old were of English men and women of the end of the eighteenth century; most of the new were present-day pictures of living Americans, both men and women. No one who climbed the stairs of the American Art Galleries, and wandered through those rambling halls, intended by the architect for an exhibition where light was less to be wished than shade, could keep his thoughts in artistic leash, and not let them stray from their proper office of looking on paintings as paintings only; no one, I mean, of the noble army of volunteer critics. It was impossible to look

first at the group of portraits painted a hundred years ago, and then at the group painted to-day, and stand undisturbed. Every spectator enacted again the comic tragedy of Rip Van Winkle. An astonishing change had taken place in men and women between the time of President Washington and that of President McKinley; bodies, faces, thoughts, had all become transformed. One short stairway from the portraits of Reynolds to those of Sargent ushered in change as if it had stretched from the first Pharaoh to the last Ptolemy. Enmeshed in bewilderment the spectator rubbed his eyes, and asked if there was no mistake, if this was really the exposition "worth millions," and not rather some biological hoax. Upon reflection it was apparent that there had been no prearrangement, no contrived purpose to confound the spectator; the ladies and gentlemen who got up the exhibition had been bent merely on giving pleasure to the eye, instruction to the mind. The show was honest beyond dispute. The first supposition which occurred to everybody was that Reynolds's Italian-cultivated and old-time craft was one aspect of excellence, the technical power and modern craft of Sar-

gent another, and, therefore, that this extraordinary contrast appearing between century and century was in truth only between painter and painter. This hypothesis soon proved untenable. The questions how and why it was untenable had better be left to answer themselves, as I recount the way in which the facts, with their inevitable connotations, were presented to the spectator's mind. Naturally, where facts hang on the wall, arranged not to illustrate a biological truth, but to economize the time of the picture-hangers, they are seen in inconsequent succession, and need some rearrangement in the mind's eye before they express their real meaning. With some rearrangement, as slight as may be, I shall briefly discuss the telltale portraits, making, as I go, certain obvious deductions, which, in the interest of brevity, I substitute for elaborate pictorial analyses. Of course I treat the pictures not as works of art, but as biological witnesses, — not unscathed by natural shame at the Philistine effrontery of my attempt.

A hundred years ago a British type of body, face, and mind prevailed from Massachusetts to Virginia; there were many individuals and sundry communities of other

bloods, but most of our ancestors of Revolutionary times were featured and complexioned like British men. Of these men there were in the galleries several portraits painted by Trumbull. There was John Adams, a short, ruddy, choleric little man, with the free bearing of an English yeoman, ready, perhaps over-ready, to defend his curtilage and cowyard, his plowed fields and fallow, against taxgatherers, Cavalier squire, or even the lord of the manor; an honest, healthy man, untroubled by any doubts as to possible encroachment by his boundary lines. Near him hung Alexander Hamilton, of more aristocratic type, open, generous, high-spirited, a sort of dashing gallant, yet of steadfast serenity; his mind resting solidly on reason and principles, an ardent English gentleman. There was James Madison, not over-imaginative, not noble, with a touch of English bulldog in his jowl, shrewd, stable; and hard by, *sopra gli altri com' aquila*, the sober, godly, righteous face of Washington, calm, almost severe, a man of purpose inwardly sustained. There was also Major-General Samuel Osgood, of somewhat Southern aspect, a hawklike keenness in the nose and eyes, woodsman in youth, soldier in

manhood, a hardy, out-of-doors kind of man. There were some Gilbert Stuarts, too: Egbert Benson, a keen, astute person, eminently a gentleman, dignity blending with calm; Chief Justice Jay, a dreamy, speculative, far-seeing man with curving lip; and Van Rensselaer, the Patroon, a sly, foxy gentleman. Both the French blood and the Dutch, as well as the English, displayed the quiet and equilibrium which attend an orderly maintenance of peace in the body and mind of man.

Neither Stuart nor Trumbull was a great painter, but both were faithful workmen with the talents allotted to them in Fortune's hugger-mugger distribution, and strove to paint what they saw. Whatever these painted faces may be to the artist, to the common eye they look like clauses from the Constitution, paragraphs from the Declaration of Independence, maxims from Poor Richard, compendia of definite beliefs and accepted principles. There is no need further to describe their looks; everybody knows them. They were not limber-minded men, not readily agnostic, not nicely skeptical; they were, neither more nor less, excepting the sprinkling of foreign bloods, eighteenth-century Englishmen. Of

course I have nothing to do with history that is neither framed nor hung; I merely render a *procès-verbal* of the testimony delivered by the portraits in this gallery.

In the main hall, into which the spectator entered directly, were hung most of the English portraits. There were Sir Joshuas, Gainsboroughs, Hoppners, Romneys, and others, as well as a few Van Dycks, and two of that "right noble Claudio" surnamed Coello. The English painters must take our exclusive attention. Reynolds, of right, comes foremost. In the corner hung Colonel Cussmaker, a handsome, haughty young person of quality, not without dignity, *nez retroussé*, mouth well curved; he stands carelessly, clad in red jacket and white breeches, by the side of his horse, embodying leisure, — eminently a person of a class apart. Certainly he has poise of mind and properly balanced physical constitution. The Reynolds young women are right-minded, healthy, simple beings, not indifferent to their own loveliness, with the naturalness of flowers and somewhat of their grace; all of them, matron and maid, of pleasing mien and soft, curving lines, all compact of serene dignity and calm. No man

ever made a happier comment on happy life than Reynolds's soft, sweeping, feminine line from ear to shoulder. These ladies led lives unvexed; natural affections, a few brief saws, a half-dozen principles, kept their brows smooth, their cheeks ripe, their lips most wooable. Even the coquettish little actress, Miss Kitty Fisher, is as much of a country girl in mind as any of them. At first the admirer takes this serene loveliness, this quiet leisure, this simple pensive pleasantness, to be the genial nature of Sir Joshua Reynolds, put by him upon his canvases. If, however, we take a step or two, and look at Gainsborough's ladies, at Romney's, or Hoppner's, we find the same attributes, in almost wearying repetition, of calm, of simplicity, of dignity, of leisure; all lovely ladies led into the ways of peace and pleasantness by simple right-mindedness, homely principles, ancestral precepts, and natural affections. Inasmuch as I present Reynolds's portraits as scientific facts, it may not be out of place to refer to Ruskin's criticism of him: "Considered as a painter of individuality in the human form and mind, I think him . . . the prince of portrait painters. Titian paints nobler pictures, and Van

Dyck had nobler subjects, but neither of them entered so subtly as Sir Joshua did into the minor varieties of human heart and temper."

If this group of portraits brought together in the American Art Galleries be deemed too small — haphazard though it is, and of most interesting pecuniary value — to serve as the basis of any hypothesis, a brief visit to any well-stocked gallery will bring confirmatory evidence. For example, in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, besides several very charming Sir Joshuas, there are a number of other English portraits of that epoch. There is a portrait of Lady Hardwick, by Francis Cotes, a gentle, graceful, tranquil, happy figure of feminine leisure; there is Mrs. Reid, as Sultana, by Robert Edge Pine, — happy the seraglio so presided over, no envy, no malice, no faint praise, no hidden sneer; there is Gainsborough's Mr. Burroughs, a well-bred, pleasant, vacant-minded gentleman; there is Sir William Beechey's portrait of a young lady, tranquil as an English landscape. These are all of one placid family, dwellers, as it were, in a garden of foxglove and honeysuckle. Even the fashionable sprightliness of Sir Thomas Lawrence's

sitters, with their airs and graces, such as the luckless Mrs. Gibbon floating like a pantomimic Ariel to an *éternité chantante*, does not conceal the fundamental qualities of the type. It is also worth while to notice the portraits of Johann Zoffany, R. A., whose testimony is the more valuable as coming from a foreigner, and Hoppner's painting of Mrs. Bache, Franklin's daughter, steady and dignified, as was necessary, being so fathered. This last picture and such portraits as Copley's serve as connecting links, if any were needed, between the eighteenth-century English type in England and the like type here.

In setting forth these facts there is the danger, not wholly to be avoided, of merely cataloguing; I will abridge the record as far as I can, and yet I must refer, very briefly, to a few French pictures of the same period. In the American Galleries was the portrait of a *notaire*, M. Laidequine, by de Latour, a placid, round-cheeked, amiable man, capped ornamentally after the fashion affected by baldish men, of a good digestion, — capon on feast days, turbot on fast, — undisturbed by red notarial tape or the rumblings of '89; a plump, sleek man, of pure French blood,

of plain ideas, of philosophic calm. He is of the bourgeoisie, but the next subject is of the blood royal. M. Nattier's portrait of the dauphin, son to Louis Quatorze, depicts a round-faced, rosy-cheeked, pleasant young gentleman with a little mouth and a petulant expression, and yet furnished with that same inward gentleness, which — so it was objected — might proceed from the geniality of Reynolds, but in truth proceeds from a stable physique and a well-ordered, logical, dogmatic philosophy. Another portrait, Le Chevalier Eusèbe de Montour, by Vanloo, is a youth of dignified aspect, in spite of his snub nose and narrow mind. Further on, the Princesse Lamballe has the air of one who has lived in a doll's house (most of the time with her hairdresser), a weasel-like little lady, whose head befitted a milliner's block better than a guillotine.

All these portraits, American, English, French, make a most happy and attractive picture of life in the eighteenth century. They chant a chorus of praise for national character, for class distinctions, for dogma and belief, for tradition, for good manners, for honor, for contemplation, for vision to

look upon life as a whole, for appreciation that the world is to be enjoyed, for freedom from democracy, for capacity when in lighter moods to treat existence as a comedy told by Goldoni. Such a self-satisfied *benedicite* irritated the susceptibility of that *nouveau riche*, the nineteenth century, itself not devoid of self-satisfaction, and drew from it a great deal of unsympathetic and unscientific criticism; in fact, the nineteenth century was more dependent on its own spectacles than any century of which we have record. We must endeavor to steer between the self-flattery of the one century and the jeers of the other, and briefly consider the traits and qualities revealed by the paintings.

They portray a pure national breed, wherein like bred with like in happy homogeneity, traits paired with consanguineous traits, racial habits and national predispositions mated after their kind; the physiological and psychological niceties, which spring from the differentiation of races and nations, were protected from the disquiet and distress of cross-breeding, deep affinities herded together, and the offspring were saved from the racking strain and distortion that beset a hy-

brid generation. This physical stability begot mental calm; peace of body insured peace of mind. Likewise, but in less degree, class spirit and smallness of numbers aided to preserve fixedness and peace; especially the peasants, kith of the cattle, kin of the corn, laid a hardy animal foundation, preaching silently the great teaching of Nature that physical life shall dominate mental life.

The abundant praise of animal life, of healthy body, of beauty of face, shouted out by these portraits, does not, however, exceed their testimony in favor of health of mind. The calm and quiet of Sir Joshua's age are scarcely more physical than moral. It is a period of the Ten Commandments, of belief, of dogma, of fixed principles, of ethical laws; to us it looks like a little world, such stress they laid on simple rules, on reverence, on the gradations of respect, on inherited morality, on denial of the democratic ethics that one virtue is as good as another. It had the merits of the village: — the gentleman of the big house, his inherited principles burnished by intercourse with his peers; the parson and the parson's wife, with their old-fashioned Christianity; the circle round the tavern fire

that concerned itself with what Dr. Johnson had pronounced; the group of critics in the store that threshed out a roughly garnered morality under the lead of the schoolmaster; and all the influences which keep unobstructed the ancient highways of thought, principle, and conduct: — these are the more obvious symbols of the conservative forces which made the sitters to Gilbert Stuart, to Gainsborough, to Vanloo, what they were. No doubt the prevailing trait in the portraits cited is leisure, aristocratic leisure; but leisure is the substance, aristocratic hue merely the superficial coloring. If these eighteenth-century painters had painted peasants, their portraits would have manifested leisure, too. It is not leisure in our mercantile sense of intervals between paroxysms of money-getting, — moral mince pies at railway stops, — but mental leisure, the "content surpassing wealth the sage in meditation found," the contemplation that brings peace, consequent upon a dogmatic orderliness of ideas and principles, an acceptance of that condition of body and mind to which it has pleased God to call men, the leisure that can express itself in poetry, in art, in good manners. Those

quiet sitters had none of the perplexity and inconsequence which mark a generation that plays its game with no rules; their courses of conduct were all meted out by principle and maintained by authority.

My business is not to analyze, but to describe, rather merely to sum up, those random faces in general terms, and give a composite account of them; and it is time to present the evidence concerning our American bodies and souls. Naturally enough Mr. Sargent's portraits by their immense dexterity, their truthfulness, their extraordinary combination of crudeness and refinement, of vigor and art, — he is the Barbarian Conqueror, the Tamerlane, of painters, — make the chief witnesses; but their evidence is so fully confirmed by men of markedly different qualities that any objection to Sargent, as a man of peculiar temperament and genius, would be hypercritical. He was born to depict a hybrid people, vagabonds of the mind, to portray the strain of physiological and psychological transformation in the evolution of a new species. His talents dovetail with the exigencies of our epoch; hence his great historical importance.

The obvious qualities in his portraits are disquiet, lack of equilibrium, absence of principle; a general sense of migrating tenants, of distrainer and replevin, of a mind unoccupied by the rightful heirs, as if the home of principle and dogma had been transformed into an inn for wayfarers. Sargent's women are more marked than his men; women, as physically more delicate, are the first to reveal the strain of physical and psychical maladjustment. The thin spirit of life shivers pathetically in its "fleshly dress;" and yet in the intensity of its eagerness it is all unconscious of its spiritual fidgeting on finding itself astray, —no path, no blazings, the old forgotten, the new not formed. These are signs that accompany the birth and development of a new species. Sargent's pictures, his handling of women, poor human documents, are too well known to justify further description.

Sargent, however, is not idiosyncratic; his testimony is corroborated by the portraits of painters differing as widely from him as is possible. Take the portrait of a lady, by Mr. Abbot H. Thayer, a most charming picture of a very attractive subject, but still exhibiting the drowsy insomnia of the soul, never

all awake, never all asleep. Take a portrait by Mr. J. W. Alexander, in which we see the indefinite, unphysical charm of American womanhood, the eager pursuit of an unseen good, the restless pacing in the body's cage. The physique of these pictured women is as marked as the soul within. There is no semblance of the simple English type, like Sir Joshua's Mrs. Arnold, the blending of health and peace, of grace and ease; none of twilight walks within a garden's wall; the American woman's body, too slight for a rich animal life, too frail for deep maternal feelings, seems a kind of temporary makeshift, as if life were a hasty and probably futile experiment. In her, passion fades before self-consciousness; and maternal love, shriveled to a sentimental duty, hardly suggests the once fierce animal instinct, the unloosed vital bond between mother and child. American mothers are dutiful, but duty is a very experimental prop in a new species, to serve in place of instinct. One should compare Hoppner's Lady Burlington and Child, or Romney's Mrs. Carwardine and Child (the latter I have only seen in copies), with a Mother and Child by Sargent. Romney's mother bends over her child;

birth has caused no spiritual separation; she and it are one creature; her arm holds it, her hand woos it, her heart spreads its wings over it. In Sargent's picture the mother waits, as in an antechamber, for a formal introduction to the child; coincidence of surname in the catalogue alone suggests a previous acquaintance.

American men, as seen in Sargent, or in almost any contemporary painter, exhibit a definite variability in this evolutionary process. They have divested themselves of the old English traits, calm, poise, and the like, and show markedly adaptive characters. What the future type may be, if it ever becomes fixed, cannot be accurately predicted, but the process of specialization necessarily involves a casting off of certain old traits and the acquisition of new, and often displays curious instances of correlation of parts. Accompanying the mental process must go a corresponding physical change, by which certain parts of the system are expanded, while other parts stand still, or, perhaps, atrophy, until the old systematic affinity is broken up and another formed, much after the fashion of the process which took place when the

unwinged animal put forth wings, or the paw evolved into the hand. Vivisection, even upon men of a different color, being prohibited by public opinion or by what statesmen deem public opinion, the inward physiological changes can only be inferred from the new traits, outward indices of interior processes. These male portraits indicate that the logical, the intellectual, the imaginative, the romantic faculties, have been discarded and shaken off, doubtless because they did not tend to procure the success coveted by the nascent variety; and, in their stead, keen, exceedingly simple powers of vision and action are developing. This type is found in Sargent, Frank Holl, Bonnat, Chase, Richard Hall. Perhaps the best example is the portrait entitled Mr. Daniel Lamont, by Zorn. Too great stress cannot be laid on the impression we make upon quick-sighted foreigners. This portrait represents a shrewd, prompt, quick, keen, compact man, well, almost brilliantly, equipped for dealing with the immediate present; he has the morale of the tennis player, concentration, utter absorption, in volley and take. Of faculties needful to deal with the remote — imagination, logic, intellect, faith — there is no trace.

Craft, the power that deals with a few facts close at hand, is depicted in abundance; so are promptitude and vigor; reason, the power that deals with many facts, remote, recalcitrant, which require the mind to hold many pictured combinations at once or in quick succession, is not there. The portrait indicates the usual American amiability, domestic kindliness, and aversion to cruel sights and cruel sounds. The logical faculty which compels a man to reconcile his theories, to unite religion and conduct, to combine principle and policy, to fuse the various parts of his philosophy into one non-self-contradicting whole, is entirely omitted. The chief trait in this typical portrait is ability to react quickly and effectively to stimuli of the immediate present, an essential quality in a prospering species; the chief lack is imagination. How such equipment will serve in the future, when the world shall have passed beyond the colonizing and commercial epochs of history, is of course wholly beyond the scope of this essay. There are a number of feminine portraits of this type, by Carolus Duran, by Mr. Benjamin C. Porter (an American painter), by Mr. Chase, which have the unimaginative look, the *terre-*

Pierce Library
Eastern Oregon University
1410 L Avenue
La Grande, OR 97850

à-terre spirit, the self-consciousness, of the male examples, although they commonly lack keenness and vigor.

The most interesting portrait for our purposes in the whole millionaire exposition, as a masculine example of that extreme variation which had seemed peculiarly feminine, is a painting entitled W. A. Clark (lent by Senator W. A. Clark), by M. Besnard, the famous French painter, whose method is sufficiently distinct from that of the other painters to give peculiar value to any corroborative evidence offered by him to facts testified by them. W. A. Clark (of the portrait) is a slim, slight man, with reddish hair of a decided color and curl, with beard and mustache of like appearance, all *hérissés*, like the fur of a cat in a thunderstorm; there is no speculation in the gray-blue, glassy eyes; they and the thin, rather delicate nose are drawn and pinched together, chest and waist are narrow, fingers but skin on bones. The tightly buttoned frock coat, never worn before the sittings, abetted by the brand-new silk hat and gloves, makes a brave attempt, with its blue boutonnière, to suggest the air of a *boulevardier*. From hair *hérissé*, pinched

face, crooked arm, and well-painted sweep of frock coat, emanate physical and mental distress, such as must accompany perturbations in Nature, when she, in desperate endeavor for a new type, hurls her wild experiments through the delicate organization of the human body, distorting all the nice adjustments of species and genus. No dogmas vex this nervous spirit, no principles chafe it, no contemplation dulls it, no discipline confines it; it ramps wildly in the strait compass of the present, knowing no past, unhampered by reverence or respect, foreseeing no future, unhindered by faith or upliftedness. It is an extreme example, but immensely interesting, for though it may be merely an erratic variation, it is near enough other examples of the type to indicate the characteristic traits of the new American nationality; or it may be an instance of that curious prophetic power of Nature, by which she creates an individual a whole generation ahead of his type. Nevertheless, a more conservative judgment would surmise that Zorn's portrait represents the normal type of the present generation, and Besnard's an exaggerated example of certain American traits.

Certainly the most vivid of the impressions carried away from that picture gallery by the inartistic spectator was admiration for the adaptive power of Nature. In a hundred years, with simple means, taking a vast expanse of land, metaled and watered, for her laboratory, with a not too extravagant use of Irish, German, Scotch, Dutch, French, and Polack bloods for her admixtures, she has, by delicate adaptive processes, keeping steady eye on her purpose to create an industrial engine, produced from a raw national type, the Adamses and Hamiltons of Washington's era, the new type displayed in Zorn's and Besnard's pictures, the type of the McKinley era.

THE MOB SPIRIT IN LITERATURE

THE MOB SPIRIT IN LITERATURE

A MOB — I use the word without disparagement — is one of the simplest forms of social organism. It is not a mere aggregate of individuals, but a new and distinct entity, which is subject to emotions; and demeans itself as a collective body, with traits and attributes of its own. A mob may be the beginning of a higher social form, as where a political mob becomes a convention; or it may be the disintegration of a higher form, as a crew in mutiny; but ordinarily it is brought into existence by the coalescence of a crowd of individuals, lives fast and furiously, and then resolves itself into its constituent elements. Mobs are of several kinds, as the street mob, the political mob, the lynching mob, the religious mob, the panic-stricken mob, the reading mob, etc. These species differ among themselves primarily by the character of the object which arouses the mob spirit. Minor differences split species into varieties, as a street mob may be subdivided into an anti-conscription mob, an abolitionist mob, a no-

popery mob; or a reading mob into an upper middle-class and a lower middle-class mob. The street mob is the normal type; it displays in simplest form the eager emotion, the imperfect comprehension, the irrational action, that mark the mob. The principal mobbish traits may be enumerated thus: —

(1) *Numbers are essential*

No two or three people, whatever their passions, desires, or acts, can constitute a mob. There must be a great congregation, so that many individuals may act and react upon one another. The greater the sum of these interactions, the more coherent, the more sensitive, the more compact, the more mobile the body becomes. Where the number of persons is very great, the new organism wholly dominates the individual members; where the number is small, the mob is of low vitality, torpid, flaccid, and exercises only a shadowy control over its members, who retain practically all their independence as individuals. The importance of numbers is best seen in a street mob, which becomes more tumultuous, more passionate, more a creature of instinct and less a creature of reason, the larger

it is. So, too, the reading mob, as it grows bigger, becomes more emotional, more excited, it reads and talks with greater avidity, is increasingly vehement in its likes, dislikes, and opinions, forces the book on its neighbors with greater rigor, buys, borrows, gives, and lends more and more with the swift and sure emotions of instinct. The reading mob is, perhaps, the largest species. The numbers who read the lower bourgeois novel are fabulous. Those who read the higher bourgeois novel are very numerous. In the meridian of its glory the mob novel soars up to several hundred thousands. "The Crisis," before it had run its course, had sold 405,000 copies, the "Eternal City" 325,000, "The Leopard's Spots," with its career before it, 94,000, "When Knighthood was in Flower" over a quarter of a million; others have sold similar numbers.

(2) *The composition of a mob is largely immaterial*

Men and women, individually governed by their own psychical laws, meet, coalesce, and form a new social body. The component individuals may be of all classes and conditions,

of all occupations and businesses, of diverse education and training, of opposite sex; they may be mild-mannered or harsh, equable or capricious, sour or jovial; once united as a mob, they strip themselves of those traits, and acquire instincts and inhibitions, sensibility to stimuli and tendencies to reactions, to which as individuals they were total strangers. For example: a mob composed of the Rev. Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and other abolitionists, meets to liberate a negro slave. It hearkens to a fiery harangue, surges down the street, pounds on a prison door, defies the policeman, and displays the ordinary symptoms of the mob spirit. Colonel Higginson all alone would not have behaved so. This difference between the mob and an individual member accounts for the rejection of a genuine mob novel by a publisher's reader, as so often happens.

The reading mob is of indiscriminate composition, except that it acquires a certain appearance of homogeneity from its division into three varieties: the proletarian reading mob, which reads dime novels; the lower bourgeois reading mob, which reads the novels of

Albert Ross, E. P. Roe, and the like; and the upper bourgeois reading mob, which reads Winston Churchill, Charles Major, Thomas Dixon, Jr., Mary Hartwell Catherwood, Hallie Erminie Rives, and others. These three varieties differ in sundry ways. Our immediate concern is with the upper bourgeois novel-reading mob, which buys its books over the book-counter of department stores, on the train, at the news-stand, from the book agent at the front door, or borrows them from circulating libraries.

(3) *The locus congregandi*

Numbers by themselves are nothing. Persons might stand side by side for a hundred years, like ghosts in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and no change take place; the individuals must affect one another, they must enter into mutual relations; they must meet and coalesce. A street mob may meet in the Place de la Concorde, on the Boston Common, or in Trafalgar Square; but the necessary condition of meeting is not physical, but psychical. In the case of a street mob, physical juxtaposition aids psychical unity, but it is only valuable as an aid. Instead of the immediate give

and take of physical effluences and emanations, of pushes, shoves, shrieks, words, and animal magnetism, there may be communication at a distance, by any means capable of conveying emotions while they are still warm. Books are as serviceable as any other vehicles of emotion.

(4) *The begetting cause of the mob spirit*

The fourth point to be considered is the nature of the relations between the members who compose the mob, the character of their mutual influences and of the contagion that leaps from one to the other. It is this contagion which gives birth to the mob spirit, and converts an unconnected, unrelated congregation of persons into a mob. "Hast thou considered," says Carlyle, "how each man's heart is so tremulously responsive to the hearts of all men?" In the case of a street mob, elbows in ribs, heels on toes, high shoulders bumping low chins, crackling with inflammatory ideas, harangued by an orator, it is easy to understand, practically if not scientifically, the nature of this mutual influence. This chemical union, this crystallization, of the mob, depends on two things, a proper condition of

receptivity and a power of suggestion, mutually acting on each other. In ordinary hypnosis it is generally agreed that there is some peculiar trance-state in the patient and some special power of suggestion in the physician. As this trance-state is often indistinguishable from ordinary waking, and suggestion from a wish or a command, and as we all (probably) are somewhat susceptible, and all have the power of suggestion, it is likely that the influences passing to and fro among mob members are of an analogous psychical order. The miraculous cures at Lourdes, Loreto, and Ste. Anne de Beaupré are also analogous; the patient is thoroughly receptive; he is especially conscious of the sense of numbers, that he is not an isolated cripple come to be cured, but a constituent part of a miraculous circuit of true believers sensitive to the thrills of life from some great and mysterious source. He is physically alone, but psychically one of many, and reacts to the sense of numbers.

In other mobs contagion is effected by analogous means, but in a somewhat different manner. Take the "mob of gentlemen who write with ease;" for instance, a mob of sonneteers of Elizabethan England. Multitudes

of sonnets are written; they pass from hand to hand, from hall to hall, from salon to salon; they are read, recited, repeated again and again; everybody talks of everybody else's sonnet. Idlers abandon their idleness, busy men forsake their business; all pick up current ideas, conceits, and rhymes, roll them up into a fourteen-line posy, and send them to spread their pollen broadcast. Such a process formed Italian sonneteers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries into the berhyming mob known as the "Arcadia." Gentlemen and ladies met, pelted one another with distichs, canzoni, quatrains, odes, and ballate, shouting "bravo!" "brava!" "stupendo!" "bellissima!" Apropos of this I quote from Goldoni's memoirs the account of his experience at Pisa: "I was walking one day near the castle, when I saw a doorway with carriages stopped before it; I looked in and saw a great court with a garden at the end and a quantity of people crowding together under a sort of pergola. I went a little closer and asked a servant in livery what reason had brought so many persons together. He, most polite and well informed, did not fail to satisfy my curiosity. 'That assembly that you

see,' he said, 'is a Colony of the Arcadians of Rome; it is called the Alphean Colony, that is, the Colony of Alpheus, a very noted river of Greece, which flowed by the ancient Pisa in Aulis.' " Goldoni was passed on to a servant of the Academy, and given a seat, "where I listened to good and bad, *and applauded the one and the other equally.* Everybody looked at me, and seemed curious to know who I was, and I had a wish to satisfy them. The man who had brought me in was not far from my chair; I called him and begged him to go and ask the President of the Assembly, whether a stranger might express in verse the satisfaction that he felt. The President put my question to the assembly, and it acceded. I had in my head a sonnet which I had composed when a lad for a similar occasion, so I changed a few words that they might better apply to this situation, and recited my fourteen lines with tone and inflections to set off the rhymes and the sentiments. The sonnet appeared to have been composed on the spot, and was warmly applauded. Everybody got up and thronged about me." Of course, numbers and mob contagion were necessary to produce this

social phenomenon. Nobody, alone, would assume a pastoral name and declaim his own sonnet. This Arcadia is an interesting variety of mob, a kind of hybrid, combining the literary *locus congregandi* of the reading mob, and the physical *locus congregandi* of the street mob.

The reading mob exhibits the phenomena of contagion, this union of receptivity and suggestion, in its own special form. It displays expectation, fixed attention, and eagerness, — "I *must* get the book right away," "You *must* read it at once," — haste to get at the plot, to assimilate experience, to devour the story, and all the irritation of suspense. It displays a craving for emotional stimulus, and also that peculiar mobbish behavior which we detect in the difference between the perusal of a classic, Balzac or Thackeray, and that of a current novel. It shows the excitement caused by the sense of numbers, the feeling that the individual is of no consequence except as one of a crowd, represented by such phrases as "*everybody* is talking of it," "*everybody* is reading it." The element which, acting upon analogy, I call suggestion, comes in various ways. The most conspicuous

factors are advertisements, publishers, wholesale booksellers, retail dealers, book agents, news-stands, parlor-car peddlers, and circulating libraries; but far more effective than these are the murmurous buzz and hum of question and answer, "Have you read it? . . . No? you must," repeated in boudoir, drawing-room, club, in the train, at the lunch table, over teacups, over the cigarette, under the umbrella. Expectation quickens, attention becomes rigid, and the mob novel, like a magnet, draws all to it.

The spread of contagion is extraordinary. I note some statistics. In September, 1901, "The Crisis" was the most generally read novel (of the upper bourgeois type) in Portland, Boston, New Haven, Providence, New York, Baltimore, Washington, Memphis, Atlanta, New Orleans, St. Louis, Dallas, Albany, Rochester, Toledo, Toronto, Cincinnati, Cleveland, St. Paul, Kansas City, Salt Lake City, Denver, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Canada to Mexico, the whole reading mob was deep in "The Crisis." The next month defervescence began, and the mob's attention shifted to "The Right of Way," which took first

place in popularity, and kept the lead in November and December, January and February. During the period while "The Crisis" was the popular leader, "The Helmet of Navarre" trod on its heels in mobbish favor. In New York, Boston, and Cleveland "The Helmet of Navarre" was second in the race; in New Haven, Portland, Maine, and Dallas it was third; in Portland, Oregon, and Denver it was fourth; and in Louisville it ran ahead.

These waves of contagion sweep over the reading mob just as contagious emotions ruffle up a street mob. But the initial cause is obscure. What does first stir the reading mob toward a particular novel? Advertising is a factor, but the outward cause, the suggestion, is far less important than the condition of receptivity. The same is true of the street mob. The exciting cause seems inadequate to the convulsive burst into action, which is rather due to the highly explosive condition of the mob. I take as an illustration the French mob of July 14, 1789. Michelet says ("Révolution Française," vol. i, p. 106): "The attack on the Bastille was not a matter of reason. It was an act of faith.

Nobody made a suggestion. But all had a belief, and all acted. Along the streets, quays, bridges, boulevards, crowds shouted to crowds, 'To the Bastille, to the Bastille!' *Nobody, I repeat, gave the initial push.*" In the analogous situation of the reading mob, when "Read 'The Crisis'" is shouted from Portland east to Portland west, the wave of emotional excitement rises internally, sweeps over the continent, and gradually subsides. The novel itself hardly seems to shed any light on the question. In relation to the Bastille mob Michelet says (vol. i, p. 109), "Et qu'est-ce que la Bastille faisait à ce peuple?" "What had those people got to do with the Bastille?" For in the Bastille aristocrats, not the people, were locked up. Yet the Bastille was chosen as appropriate to satisfy the mob appetite; the Palais Royal, the Louvre, the Palais des Tuileries, were left. It must be taken on faith that there is some element in a mob novel that arouses the mob appetite for perusal.

(5) *Rudimentary intellectual life*

In a mob there is no proper division of function, no coördination of parts, no mem-

bers doing diverse tasks for the common weal, no reasoning or critical faculty. A street mob, so far as reason is concerned, has the mental apparatus of a jellyfish; but it has a high emotional development, and great capacity for hasty action, and is extremely sensitive to certain simple ideas. In the case of the Lord George Gordon riots, for example, the mob conception of law is shown by the fact that it rummaged for parchment so that the "skin of an innocent lamb might no longer be converted into an indictment." The idea is simple, the emotion strong, the action vigorous. A panic-stricken mob has but the two ideas, fire and escape, but it behaves very violently. If one looks at the Arcadian mob, one will find the mob sonnet compact of exceedingly simple conceits, the red cheeks, the Aphrodite smile, the alabaster bosom, and so forth.

The intellectual development of the reading mob is well illustrated by the heroes and heroines that interest it. Of these I shall quote several examples. All are taken from mob novels of the upper bourgeois type.

Heroine: "Her skin was like velvet; a rich, clear, rosy snow, with the hot young blood glowing through it like the faint red

tinge we sometimes see on the inner side of a white rose leaf. Her hair was a very light brown, almost golden, and fluffy, soft, and fine as a skein of Arras silk. She was of medium height, with a figure Venus might have envied. Her feet and hands were small, and apparently made for the sole purpose of driving mankind distracted. . . . Her greatest beauty was her glowing dark brown eyes, which shone with an ever changing lustre from beneath the shade of the longest, blackest upcurving lashes ever seen." ("When Knighthood was in Flower.")

Hero: "His were the generous features of a marked man — if he chose to become marked." He had "a natural and merciless logic — a faculty for getting at the bottom of things. His brain did not seem to be thrown out of gear by local magnetic influences, — by beauty, for instance. Here was a grand subject to try the mettle of any woman." His "features were sharply marked. The will to conquer was there. Yet justice was in the mouth, and greatness of heart. Conscience was graven on the broad forehead. The eyes were the blue gray of the flint, kindly yet imperishable." He was "trusted of men, hon-

ored of women, feared by the false." Sometimes, once at least, "an ocean-wide tempest arose in his breast." ("The Crisis.")

A rival has "delicately chiseled features, with their pallor, and satiety engraved there at one and twenty, . . . lazy scorn in the eyes, and the look which sleeplessness gives to the lids, . . . the willful indulgence — not of one life, but of generations — about the mouth . . . a face to dare anything and to do anything. . . . He had the carriage of a soldier, the animation and endurance of the thoroughbred when roused." ("The Crisis.")

Another heroine: "The second was a tall, beautiful girl, with an exquisite ivory-like complexion, and a wonderful crown of fluffy red hair which encircled her head like a halo of sunlit glory. I could compare its wondrous lustre to no color save that of molten gold deeply alloyed with copper. It was red, but it also was golden, as if the enamoured sun had gilded every hair with its radiance . . . [it] fringed her low, broad forehead, and upon the heavy black eyebrows, the penciled points of whose curves almost touched across the nose . . . the rosy-tinted ivory of her skin . . . the long eyes which changed cha-

meleon-like with the shifting light, and varied with her moods from fathomless green to violet, and from violet to soft voluptuous brown," etc. ("Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall.")

Here is another: "Upon her alabaster skin, the black eyebrows, the long lashes, the faint blue veins and the curving red lips stood in exquisite relief, . . . her round snowy forearm and wrist . . . the perfect curves of her form." (*Ibid.*)

Another: "A slender girl . . . of that age when nature paints with her richest brush. Her hair was a wave of russet lights, with shadows of warmer brown. Her face, rose-stained, was the texture of a rose. Her mouth, below serious eyes of blended blue, gave a touch of willfulness. If there was intentness on the brow, so was there languor in the lips, red, half-ripe, the upper short and curved to smile. She was all raptures — all sapphire and rose-gold, against the dark cushion." ("Hearts Courageous.")

(6) *Absence of reasoning and critical faculties*

Another marked mobbish trait, or perhaps another aspect of the last trait, — low intel-

lectual life, — is the absence of duly constituted authority. Leaders must be improvised on the spur of the moment. At the head of the two columns that attacked the Bastille were Hullin, a watchmaker from Geneva, and Elie, a soldier of fortune; they had no previous authority; their credentials were the spasmodic needs of the moment. So, too, our reading mob has no leaders, no guides. In the mob itself there is no critical faculty. Reflex action answers to peripheral stimulus; there is no pondering, no consideration, no choice of acts. If there were critics, men of natural gifts and educated taste, experienced in the humanities, there would be no mob; for the condition of headlessness, of unguidedness, is essential to a mob. But there are no American critics, except Mr. Henry James, who confines himself to a consideration of foreigners. If he would turn his mind to American criticism —

> Ac, veluti magno in populo quum saepe coorta est
> Seditio, saevitque animis ignobile vulgus —

authoritative with literary piety and desert, he might become a disciplinary and coördinating force. Other writers wander about the ante-chamber of criticism, — *la salle des pas*

perdus, — and speak sympathetically to the mob. They obey the gregarious impulse. It is so with all mob leaders. To the Bastille mob Hullin and Elie cry, "En avant, nobles esprits!" to the religious mob the Herr Pfarrer shouts, "Gott mit uns!" to the Roman citizens Mark Antony says, "Good friends, sweet friends!" The mob leader is infected with the mob spirit, and seeks to take advantage of it, not to correct and overcome it. Our mob critics, naturally somewhat afraid of the mob, use a series of adjectives (as a drover's boy shouts "gee" and "haw" *post eventum* to conceal the fact that he follows, and does not guide, his steers), — "suggestive," "unique," "exclusive," "convincing," "vital," "well-visualized;" or brief phrases, — "a book of distinction," "chastity of diction," "the touch of sureness," etc., and then encourage the mob by one of three methods of appeal. The first is to say that the author is a good story-teller, which to the mob means, "Mob, you have excellent judgment in plots;" the second, that the tale is highly moral, "Oh, virtuous mob!" the third, that the story is American. For instance, one critic says: "One of the most cheerful features of

the whole matter is the fact that that growth of Americanism to which we had occasion to refer last winter is becoming steadily more apparent. Of the seventy-five places held among the first selling books by the novels that we have mentioned [of the upper bourgeois sort] all but fifteen are to the credit of American authors." This is the regular patriotic device of the mob orator. All the Roman mob orators lay stress upon the fact that their hearers are Romans. Antony says, "You gentle *Romans*," and "Friends, *Romans*, countrymen." Brutus says, "*Romans*, countrymen, and lovers." As for morality, it is a well-marked trait in a mob to esteem itself highly moral, and, in its way, to be highly moral. The Lord George Gordon mob destroyed much gold and silver plate, but stole none. The Abolitionist mob was notoriously self-righteous. Nevertheless, morality is not always characteristic of mobs, even of reading mobs, though self-imputed morality probably always is. To praise the mob, however, is certainly the safest, perhaps the only, course open to the mob orator and the mob critic.

Thus we see that mobbish traits consist in numbers, union, coalescence, low organic

structure, imperfect functions, violent emotions, infectious actions, and the absence of any controlling or critical faculty; and, finally, that numbers and the absence of authority are the two chief characteristics. This analysis is partially but strongly confirmed by an investigation from an entirely different point of view, — from the standpoint of art.

Art is a matter based upon the experiences, not of all men, as is science, but of the few. An individual, — one man out of millions in ordinary places, one out of hundreds in highly gifted communities, — perceives something which disturbs his viscera, makes his heart beat faster, brings color to his cheek, brightness to his eye, buoyancy to his spirit, which kindles joy, tenderness, sentiment, triumph, exultation. Excited by his experience, he broods over it, and tries to counterfeit what he conceives to be the stimulating cause, primarily because of the felicity which comes as he busies himself with this enriching experience, partly that he may see his own sensations reflected in other faces, and incidentally that he may win honor, money, or whatever unconsidered, secondary consequences may chance to follow. This happy but solitary

man, who quivers like a racehorse at what other men pass like oxen, is the artist. His experiences are the facts of art; his counterfeits of the stimulating causes are what we call works of art. The experiences of beauty, of harmony, of color, or whatever it may be, which other men have, are of a different order, and have no artistic significance. However, there are men who have direct business with the artists' experiences; they are the critics. They may be wholly unable to counterfeit the stimulating causes, and yet they comprehend the artists' experiences, and interpret these experiences to the many. The critic's business is to study these experiences, compare and classify them, and render them, as far as may be, intelligible to the crowd. His mission is revelation, and his attitude must be one of authority.

Here, then, we have art, the experience of the few, and authority, the judgment of the few, both antithetical to the mob spirit, which knows neither law nor authority, and follows the gusty impulses of instinct. Art and the mob are mutually exclusive, like heat and cold. A mob cannot have its attention fixed by a work of art. When the crowd

reads "Hamlet" or stares at the Mona Lisa, it acts in obedience to authority — to the authority of the critics; it has ceased to be a mob, it recognizes the word of command, given by Lessing, Sainte-Beuve, Matthew Arnold, or Ruskin, and marches as to military music, rank upon rank, in orderly sequence, and salutes the world's masterpieces. Discipline, whether it proceeds from the presence of a general, an archbishop, or a critic, is a sure sign that the crowd has passed beyond that stage of homogeneous incoherence which is essential to a mob. This transformation is normal; a mob must either turn into a disciplined body or resolve itself into its constituent elements. As regards the reading mob, the transformation into an educated body of readers is, of course, infinitely slower than the change from a street mob into an orderly group of burghers; it will depend on the number of artists and of critics. The public schools and our general system of education, to which we ordinarily turn in such difficulties, unfortunately supply the conditions that make a reading mob possible, and do not offer any hope of cure. Art and authority are the only remedies.

In a country so large, with so great a population, where there is so much vigor, energy, and will, it is not unreasonable to hope that artists will come; but they will require sympathy, comprehension, support, and these can be made ready only by the critic. His first task must be to tame the turbulent mob spirit, in which we Americans take so much pride and pleasure; and then, when that wild spirit shall have been tamed, the genius of art may feel that here is a place for her, a duty and an opportunity, may make America her home and the literature of America her favorite child.

MRS. WHARTON

MRS. WHARTON

I

When Mrs. Wharton's stories first appeared, in that early period which, as we have now learned, was merely a period of apprenticeship, everybody said, "How clever!" "How wonderfully clever!" and the criticism — to adopt a generic term for indiscriminate adjectives — was apt, for the most conspicuous trait in the stories was cleverness. They were astonishingly clever; and their cleverness, as an ostensible quality will, caught and held the attention. And yet, though undoubtedly correct, the term owes its correctness, in part at least, to its ready-to-wear quality, to its negative merit of vague amplitude, behind which extremely diverse gifts and capacities may lie concealed. No readers of Mrs. Wharton, after the first shock of bewildered admiration, rest content with it, but grope about to lift the cloaking surtout of cleverness and to see as best they may how and by what methods her preternaturally nimble wits are playing their game, — for it is a game that Mrs. Wharton

plays, pitting herself against a situation to see how much she can score.

To many people the point she plays most brilliantly is the episode, which in the novel is merely one of the links in the concatenation of the plot, but in the short story is the form and substance, the very thing itself; and so to be mistress of the art of the episode almost seems to leave any other species of mastery irrelevant and superfluous. In Mrs. Wharton this aptitude is not single, but a combination. It includes the sense of proportion, and markedly that elementary proportion of allotting the proper space for the introduction of the story,— so much to bring the *dramatis personæ* into the ring, so much for the preliminary bouts, so much for the climax, and, finally, the proper length for the recessional. It includes the subordination of one character to another, of one picture to another, the arrangement of details in proper hierarchy to produce the desired effect.

"The Dilettante," for instance, is a good example of craft in introducing a situation. The story is very short, the episode a mere dialogue; and, as the nature of the dialogue forbids an explanation of the situation through

the mouths of the speakers, a neat prologue, in half-livery as it were, opens the door and takes your name, then the dialogue, in full livery, immediately shows you upstairs into the inner privacy of the episode, where the climax awaits you. You are met at each step by the forethought of a somewhat anxious hostess; and there is throughout a well-bred economy of effort which one expects to pass into grace, but which for some reason deflects and slips back into cleverness.

Some readers deem the dialogue the strongest point of Mrs. Wharton's game, it is so pithy and witty. Others, again, among the various excellences, prefer the author's own observations and comments. Still others like best the epigrams, or the dramatic interest of the incident itself.

If the reader, after he has gone over these various points in the game, attempts to sum up his impressions, to his astonishment and dismay he finds himself again face to face with his old adjective *clever*. At first he surmises that this is a trick of his own indolence, which, lazily yielding to habit, offers him this serviceable word; but upon reflection he perceives that the adjective has a positive

merit. It is a word of limitation; it fences in its own domain, and excludes other regions beyond. Mrs. Wharton's stories are not original like Miss Wilkins's, not poetic like George Eliot's, not romantic like Bret Harte's, not rippling with muscular energy like Kipling's, nor smooth with the dogmatic determinism of Maupassant. To none of those story-tellers would one apply the word clever; and though Mrs. Wharton cannot very well monopolize the adjective, by her high level of skill, by her ready command over her own resources, by her tact, by her courage,—no situation daunts her,—and especially by her limitations, she wholly justifies the public in crying out, "Oh, clever Mrs. Wharton!"

Cleverness not only limits its own domain, but stamps a special character upon it. In the novel proper there is one fundamental rule: that the characters, once introduced, must act with the large liberty of life, and work out their own fortunes. For novelists believe that, though other arts are all artificial and do not hold up the mirror to nature, yet their art is life indeed, their business is to leave the reader uncertain whether he is really in or out of the book. Let that be so. Novels proper are not

everything. There are other fields of fiction in which the author is an absolute tyrant, and need make no pretense of giving his characters any free will whatever. To these regions the short story as a rule belongs. There is no room for liberty. The characters must complete their episode in scanty pages, and they must do the most artificial things in order to make the scene effective. Mrs. Wharton makes a most excellent tyrant, and gives her subjects vastly more vivacity than they would have if left to themselves. The dialogues are far too good for life, the episodes too well modeled, the motives too well calculated, the actions too complete, to admit of any doubt concerning the immediate presence of the autocrat. Everywhere the emphasis is the emphasis of art, not of life. Not only, of course, is this literary art wholly legitimate, but some people might contend that it is the only art worth having. Artificial fiction makes no pretense that it is a reflection of life; it does not profess to make a real man and a real woman living in a real house, and really talking over real toast and tea. It sets itself up as an independent art, with its own rules, its own proprieties, its own standard of success. It is akin

to artificial comedy, as Sheridan, for instance, handled it. No one judges "The Rivals" as a bit of real life. The business of Mrs. Wharton's *dramatis personæ* is to portray an effective episode; and it is a business which requires cleverness, as distinguished from originality, poetic feeling, humor, insight, romance, energy, or power.

II

Going a step farther, the most casual investigator becomes acquainted with Mrs. Wharton's propriety, tact, nicety of craftsmanship, and that special possession which in creative art is of the first importance, — human personality. Those people who advocate the suppression of all traces of the creator in his creations are too ascetic, too marmoreal, too super- or infra-human. Our generation, not yet wholly purged of the lingering effects left by the old Romantic individualism, cannot but feel that the more fiction is interpenetrated by the author's personality the more interesting it is.

This assumption involves as a corollary the immense importance of gender; and gender is indeed a matter of fundamental interest in

literature, as in life. We are born on one side or the other of the great chasm; and in whichever camp we are, on the approach of anything that awakens our real interest, we challenge at once, "Fine or Superfine?" A man's world is not a woman's world. He and she are differently endowed; they perceive differently, —that is, all except the bald, unannotated reports of the senses,—group their impressions differently, deduce differently. Traits which preserve neutrality and straddle the chasm, serving both sides alike, are limited to the performance of the mechanical parts of fiction and are subject to rules and regulations. Where they end begins the employment of those faculties that make individuality; and here the first rough-and-ready test as to whether the work has the flavor of personality is the determination of sex. Readers, male readers at least, are sometimes so blinded by prejudice, by an indefensible habit of identifying art with the male sex, that when a woman writes a novel such as "Jane Eyre" or "Adam Bede," there is a general masculine readiness to be surprised, and a general masculine agreement that the talents and capacities which created the novel are of a

peculiarly masculine order. In Mrs. Wharton's case men are debarred from any such self-complacent theory, for her talents and capacities are not only intrinsically feminine, but also, despite her cleverness, which, generally speaking, is a neutral trait, they are superficially feminine.

This fundamental fact of Mrs. Wharton's femininity is conspicuous in many ways. There was, for instance, in her early stories a certain feminine dependence, as a girl on skates for the first time might lay the tip of her finger on a supporting arm. She showed a wish to learn, a ready docility, and the attractive simplicity of credulity toward her first teacher, such as women, with their innate appreciation of authority, possess in a much greater degree than men. This hesitating dependence, as she took her first comparatively timid steps, following as closely as she could the sway and oscillations to which her teacher subjected his equilibrium, served her purpose. She learned her lesson, skated with ever greater ease, and, though still maintaining the rules she had learned, gradually got her own balance, and, after hard work and frequent practice, skated off, head erect, scarf,

ribbons, and vesture floating free, with the speed and security of a racer. Her movements are always feminine movements, her ease, her poise, always feminine.

There is also in the stories what one might call a certain feminine capriciousness or arbitrariness, even beyond the ordinary autocracy of the story-teller, — a method of deciding upon instinct rather than upon reflection. Take the union of episodes. Mrs. Wharton sees her story in episodes; or rather she sees episodes and puts them together. Sometimes they have no natural congruity, or are even rebelliously opposed to union. A man would acknowledge their independence, and leave them apart; but Mrs. Wharton, insisting on her autocratic prerogatives, forcibly unites them. In "The Sanctuary," for example, she conceived the idea of repeating weakness of character and similarity of temptation in two generations; so she contrived two episodes, which, however, had no natural bond of union. She then put double duty on the heroine, and made her fulfill the function of joining the two episodes by the ingenious method of marrying her to the hero of the first in order to make her the mother of the hero of the second.

Her choice of plot, even, is distinctly feminine. Take "The Touchstone," for instance: given the situation, a man would have shifted the centre of gravity, and have rearranged all the effects. Her emphasis, her sense of interest, of importance, differ from a man's. Her feminine tact — that quality of unexpected control among forces so slight or so stubborn that no man can see how a woman gets her leverage, that power of steering when his rudder would be trailing in the air or stuck in the mud — is conspicuous in dialogue, in adjustment of relations, in the whole frame and finish of the story.

These characteristics are minor matters, but they point unhesitatingly to the conclusion that Mrs. Wharton is not only mentally feminine, with all the value of personality and humanity, but so much so as to belong plainly enough to the species, — the notable and justly celebrated species, — American woman. This interesting type has been studied with the ardor due to the rapid modification by which it has diverged from its European progenitors. Its salient traits are well known, and perhaps no one has portrayed them more effectively than Mr. John Sargent.

In his portraits we see a network of nerves drawn too taut for the somewhat inadequate equipment of flesh and blood; so disproportionate an attention given to the business of receiving and acting upon sensations that there is no proper leisure for the sensations themselves; a superior, indeed, a snubbing attitude of the nervous system toward the rest of the body. In Sargent's women there is no wholesome tendency to loafing, no ease of manner, no sense of physical *bien-être:* rather they stand, or sit (in the latter case on the edge of their chairs), like discoboli, waiting for a signal to whirl and hurl anything — anywhere, — direction being unimportant, the sibylline contortion everything. This fundamental nervous restlessness shows itself in all Mrs. Wharton's stories, in her rapidity of thought, of phrase, of dialogue, in her intensity, her eagerness, her rush of thought. This American dash, this cascade-like brilliancy of motion, make, no doubt, for most readers the interest of the stories. But many of us, idle and inefficient, weakly wish for repose, a little pause, a trifling indulgence. With many story-tellers the reader gets aboard an accommodation train, and during

the jogging, the stopping and starting, the pleasant Trollopy leisure, looks out of the window, reflects on what has gone before, and speculates on what is to come. None of these weaknesses are permitted to Mrs. Wharton's readers, — I speak of the stories; — we are booked express, the present is all-exacting, and the pace is American.

This nervous eagerness and intensity find their fullest and freest expression in the epigrams, metaphors, similes, and aphorisms which crack fast and furious about our ears. No sooner do we hear an epigrammatic phrase, catch a loose end of its applicability and grasp at apprehension, than crack! crack! goes another, and another. There is something almost vindictive in this hailstorm. "His egoism was not of a kind to mirror its complacency in the adventure." "There was something fatuous in an attitude of sentimental apology toward a memory already classic." "He had no fancy for leaving havoc in his wake, and would have preferred to sow a quick growth of oblivion in the spaces wasted by his inconsidered inroads;" and so forth. Such quotations — they glitter on every page — are clearly the literary gesticulations of an American woman.

III

This American element, which gives the stories so much of their character, is also noticeable in another of Mrs. Wharton's accomplishments, — one had almost said one of her talents, so fully and freely does she use it, — her artistic and literary cultivation. That cultivation is distinctly American in the sense that it immediately displays its American acquisition and ownership, and peremptorily excludes the notion that it might be English cultivation or French.

That such a distinction may be taken is due, no doubt, to the fact that we are on this shore of the Atlantic, and not on the other. The great traditional humanities, the inheritances of literature and art, are fundamentally foreign to us. Our ancestors did not create them, did not experience the emotions that prompted their creation, nor were they in any way cognizant of the stimulating circumstances under which they were produced. Emigration from Europe broke the course of spiritual descent, and our type is so much the result of modification by new conditions, and, by a natural selection, adapted to such new conditions, that

our inheritance of European understanding and sympathy is an almost negligible quantity. We learn the humanities as we learn lessons; not in the way cultivated Englishmen or Frenchmen learn them, as part and parcel of their familiar experience of life.

Nevertheless, our national theory is that culture is not to be neglected, but to be assimilated rapidly in a manner becoming the busy, forward-looking American spirit; and, accordingly, we make ourselves acquainted with the humanities, — as we might become acquainted with the British peerage in Burke, — in terms of galleries, museums, operas, scenery; whereas to Europeans the humanities, the inheritances of art and literature, constitute a collection of ideas, expressed in various modes, a study for discipline, for growth, for pleasure. Such being our attitude, we naturally look to the country where humanism, culture, art may most rapidly be *got up*, where the greatest number of names may with least effort be appended to the greatest number of things, the amplest amount *Bohned* with the least expenditure of effort. That country, beyond dispute, is Italy, and thither we betake ourselves.

It would be absurd to apply this rude generalization to Mrs. Wharton's cultivation, which is so unusual in variety, accuracy, and scholarship; but one does not wholly escape an intimation of the presence of this cis-Atlantic attitude in the evidences of cultivation so profusely scattered through Mrs. Wharton's stories, and the patriotically inclined are justified in pointing to her with pride as a product of our national civilization.

This point, otherwise unimportant, suggests the further point — whether culture of this character is favorable for the production of fiction. Of course the most highly cultivated novelist might write fiction free from all badges of the author's culture, but that would be rather a European way of doing than an American. Take Mr. Henry James, for instance, — one would search his novels in vain for any such obvious badges; or take D' Annunzio, — no writer is more imbued with the culture of Italy than he, and though he uses that culture obviously, yet he uses it merely as a color to emphasize the pattern of his story. We are inclined (I refer to those of us who move in the denser and stuffier strata of our national

culture, and not to those who, like Mrs. Wharton, float in a purer upper air) to hold the man who uses his knowledge of literature and art for personal enjoyment only as an epicurean egotist; we look upon his accomplishments as bad investments until he is able to exhibit dividends. And he, not daring to hoist a standard unacceptable to the community, readily succumbs to our attitude, and hurries to advertise his possessions. The European method of mere unavoidable enrichment of the matter in hand is seldom adopted.

Mrs. Wharton, though flying briskly through that purer upper air, nevertheless is unconsciously affected by the fumes which rise from below. Her cultivation declares the most appetizing dividends. She showers her references and allusions to art and letters with the ready cleverness and lavish prodigality with which she scatters her epigrams. One cannot help asking one's self, diffidently indeed, but pertinaciously: are not the ornaments too clinquant, do not the decorations assert themselves too presumptuously and mar the softer and more harmonious colors of the groundwork? And the question, or a question derived from that question, obtrudes itself most

insistently in reference to "The Valley of Decision."

When that novel was first published, the fashion was to disentangle and distinguish, — as one ruminates and speculates over the flavors of a salad, — to separate the several ingredients culled from many books, and to crow over the discovery or attribution; in blindness to the fact that the somewhat royal levy of tribute was the object of the book, open, obvious, proclaimed, and carefully planned. The story, on purpose, is subordinated to its setting. The actors are necessarily a little frigid, the hero, unwillingly perhaps, a *poseur*, the heroine willingly a *poseuse;* but the scenery in which they carry about their rarefied and cool personalities is very attractive. Considering the book from the point of view of pageantry, one almost inclines to name it beside "Le Capitaine Fracasse," so prodigal is it in details of information, so many-hued and high-colored in general effect, — the hero and heroine dutifully going hither and thither wherever the calcium light will fall most effectually on the rich scenery.

Of course there were persons, devotees to

the dogma that the proper material for a novel is personal experience of life, who said that a book compact of memories of other books, *souvenirs des voyages intellectuels*, was not admissible, must be frowned upon. But arbitrary positions, satisfactory though they be to the occupants, are not necessarily satisfactory to others. At present, authority in literature is of little moment, and success justifies itself. If Mrs. Wharton could gather matter, shear wool as it were, from "Wilhelm Meister," "La Chartreuse de Parme," the memoirs of Goldoni, Alfieri, Casanova, sundry novels of Turgenieff, and what else besides, and make an interesting novel, one might fairly say that she had done admirably to use whatever materials were adapted to her purpose; for Shakespeare did not hesitate to use materials ready to his hand. The success is the matter. All life is but a transmutation of materials, and novelists may use whatever they can find in books, in history, in life, in imagination; the point is to create life again. One would hardly go so far in praise of "The Valley of Decision" as to think of it as creating life out of its literary materials. It did not do that; it made a very entertaining,

interesting, and agreeable book. It gave that longed-for sensation of floating down a romantic river whose banks are lined with the rich hues which only far-away distances and the irrevocable past possess. One heard, despite a forced assent to pedantic and literary fault-finding, the "tirra lirra by the river" that caught one's imagination and bore it off.

Perhaps the first after-effect of the book on the reader was to set him wondering as to Mrs. Wharton's future career. Would she confine herself to study, to scholarship, to the world of the connoisseur and amateur? Would she be our cicerone to the agreeable things of art and literature? Or would she take the other road, study life, and become a novelist? It was not easy to decide one's wishes. Now, more than ever, we need critics to help us to an appreciation of the pleasures of refinement. Europe is so near, and so easily overrun, that the obvious charms of the obviously beautiful are daily rendered more and more obvious and less and less charming by scores of amiable persons, who interpose themselves and their shadows between us and the beauties of the past. We are so much more disposed to see obvious beauty, so much more

disposed to *have seen* it, than to sit before one beautiful thing and incorporate it in our experience, that we need a teacher to teach us what immense differences lie huddled close to one another, how far apart are things that look to us so much alike. On the other hand, how delightful to have a real novelist, one who out of her own personal experience of life will take a part that shall stand by itself, and give us a sense of satisfaction, which is, after all, the emotion that we commonly crave in novels, — the satisfaction of knowledge, of experience, of sympathy, of happiness, of sorrow, of life. And though, after reading the stories, the reader did not expect from Mrs. Wharton pathos, nor humor, nor tragedy, nor a wide range of experience, nor broad sympathies, nor raids upon the heart, one did expect wit, satire, flashes of insight, comprehension, analysis, vividness. So one stood with a divided mind.

In such a mood the volumes on "Italian Gardens" and on "Italian Backgrounds" came, with some interval between them. The name "Italian Gardens" carried with it a special aroma, and gave a fillip to expectation. At last we were to get at the meaning of

Italian gardens, which to our ignorance appeared so inferior to the English in all usual horticultural appointments, in flowers, shrubs, turf, and trees; so unsentimental in their terraces, formalities, and observances, when compared with the "wet, bird-haunted English lawn" and the brick-walled, fruit-beloved, rose-encumbered gardens of England. The book, however, was a disappointment. Whether Mrs. Wharton's hand had not complete control, or whether she was impatient of a prescribed task, or whether the translation of the inner delicacies of an Italian garden into American notions was a task unsuited to her talents, or whatever the reason, the book had a cold, perfunctory, mechanical ring. We had hoped to share the branchless sentiment of the stone pine's bole, the green thoughts of the lizards that crawl out under the Italian sun, to enter into the connubial sympathies between ilex and stucco, to understand why Mignon felt the lemon's fragrance in so peculiarly rapturous a manner; but the book leaves us with a number of names of villas and of landscape gardeners, a consciousness of emptiness, and the conviction that Mrs. Wharton has never spent an hour in a garden up-

rooting weeds, hunting rose-bugs, squashing caterpillars, or sealing up new-made homes of borer worms with putty and clay. One may talk with landscape gardeners by the hour about prospects, middle distances, reaches, effects, about lines of box, parallels of sweet peas, clumps of viburnum, about the values of an axis and of straight lines, about the etiquette of graveled paths and the massing of afternoon shadows; but the trowel and a broken back, the pruning hook and dazzled eyes, the vendetta with the slug, the rich, creative fragrance of manure, the heat and sweat of noon, dirty hands,—with these indispensables to the love and knowledge of any garden Mrs. Wharton betrays no acquaintance.

In "Italian Backgrounds" she is on surer footing. She is familiar with Italy, and she has a very wide knowledge of the best that has been thought and said of Italy. She is hand and glove with the critics of art. She never enters a town in Italy, no matter how small, but she has in her handbag Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Kugler, Burckhardt, Morelli, Berenson, and a half-dozen more. She looks at every picture, every fresco, every bit of

sculpture and carving, like a constitutional queen, and they are her responsible advisers; she judges cherubim, madonnas, portraits, choir-stalls, proportions of height and breadth, contrasts of light and shade, relations of Gothic to Romanesque, of the *quattrocento* to the *cinquecento*, of masters to pupils, all according to the laws and rules adopted by her learned advisers, to which she gives full assent and approval. Certainly she does this well. There are no errors to be subsequently corrected, no rash ventures to be regretted; but ill-regulated readers sometimes long to fling authority to the winds. We want to know, not what Morelli thought or Burckhardt, but what Mrs. Wharton thinks; we want her to pitch her portable library out of the window, send Berenson to Jericho, make mistakes on every page, and let us hear how beautiful Italy impresses her. It is her personal intimacy with Italy that interests us.

IV

It was at this moment, when Mrs. Wharton's devotion to culture seemed to produce less ripeness, less freshness of flavor, than our general elation with her accomplishments

had led us to expect, that "The House of Mirth" made its triumphant appearance. Here Mrs. Wharton, as it were, lays down her hand (with all its trumps) on the table, and enables us to understand her play and to determine whether she is the novelist for us, whether she is able to provide us with that personal satisfaction to which as novel-readers we aspire. For our personal satisfactions are still, in America, our chief preoccupation. Elsewhere, it may be, a novelist is judged as an artist, a novel as a work of art. This foreign method, if it exists, is due to a coincidence between the reader's personal appetite and his artistic appetite, or to the subordination of the former to the latter. In this country there is no such coincidence, no such subordination; and novelists must submit, if they wish to be read, to the democratic methods of our merit system, must run the gauntlet of our personal tastes.

With a knowledge that this system obtains in this country, Mrs. Wharton approached her present position, which one may call, out of deference to its eminence, that of the novelist-laureate. Like other laureateships, Petrarch's for instance, it is a position that lies

in the public gift, and the candidate must commend himself or herself to the good opinion of the patron. The only objection to the position is that in making the appointment the patron regards its own satisfaction far more than the excellence of its appointee, and interposes the obstacle of its appetite between approval and even so admirable a candidate as Mrs. Wharton. In other arts an artist is braced and enabled to sacrifice all to his art through the support afforded by the intellectual exclusiveness of the small band before which he presents himself; but the novelist is deprived of such support by the nature of his craft, and when he addresses a pure democracy of readers, as he must to obtain the laurel, there is an immense temptation to do what may be necessary to secure the patron's ear. None would go so far as to suggest that Mrs. Wharton deliberately or even consciously sought that ear, that she entertained any covetous thoughts of the laureateship when she held up to public gaze a certain aspect of fashionable life in New York in a popular and somewhat melodramatic fashion; on the contrary, she would doubtless prefer a patrician patron of her own choosing; but being

an American, it would have been unnatural had she wholly avoided the inoculation administered by her birth and education. Our universal acceptance of the patron's right to appoint makes too strong a current to be withstood, unless there be some very good reason for resistance, and there was none in this case. The point I wish to make is that Mrs. Wharton is so thoroughly American that even in "The House of Mirth" she adopts a popular method unintentionally and successfully.

But most certainly one must not suffer this idea (too grossly stated), that Mrs. Wharton is affected by the atmosphere around her, does hear the murmurs of the many-voiced public, to obscure in any way one's judgment of her excellences as an artist; on the contrary, the idea should merely remind us that there is this unconscious difficulty with which her art has to struggle, and make us appreciate the more the brilliancy of her success.

On reading "The House of Mirth," the first sensation of everybody, included or not among those whose plebiscite granted the laurel, was one of exultation, of "I told you so," as they recognized all Mrs. Wharton's

talents, but better and brighter. Her mastery of the episode is as dashing as ever, and more delicate. The chapters are a succession of tableaux, all admirably posed. And yet this mastery, by its very excess, has marred the work of its necessary companion art, the hymeneal art of uniting episodes; it will not suffer any episode to remain in a state other than that of celibate self-sufficiency. But in a novel no episode can be self-sufficient; it must proceed from the episode before and merge into the episode that follows. In this part of her craft Mrs. Wharton has always shown a certain lack of dexterity; and the general effect of "The House of Mirth" is to throw this difficulty into high relief. There are places where the junction of two episodes appears no more than as the scar of an old inadequacy; and then again there are others where the episodes seem animated by a desire to break away from the trammels of the plot and pose by themselves. They remind one of the succession of prints that constitute "The Rake's Progress." Like the rake, Lily Bart proceeds downward from print to print, from Trenor circle to Gormer circle, from the Gormers to Norma Hatch, from Norma to milli-

nery; and so on, from morn to noon she falls, from noon to dewy eve, down to her catastrophe; each stage is a distinct episode, a scene which Hogarth — with Sir Joshua Reynolds to paint Lily's picture — might have portrayed.

The epigrams are as luminous as ever, but they are no longer firecrackers; they are brightened and softened to electric lights ensconced in Venetian glass, where they shed both illumination and color. They maintain their old electric vivacity, — Mrs. Bart sits at her husband's bedside "with the provisional air of a traveler who waits for a belated train to start," — but now they serve a purpose, they explain, they emphasize, and in no readily forgettable manner. To be sure, the temptation to use an epigram because it is an epigram has not wholly lost its sweetness. Such phrases as "her finely disseminated sentences made their chatter dull" still recall a morning notebook in which the happy thoughts of a restless night are recorded; yet, on the whole, they serve to remind us that the epigram is a mark of youth, — youth cannot bring itself to forego the glitter of any of its diamonds, — and that Mrs. Wharton is still in the open-

ing of her summer time, before the period of her ripest harvests.

The less artistic traits, which revealed themselves at times in the stories, show a great gain in self-effacement. Mrs. Wharton's nervous American energy has become far less tense, less fitful, far more even and self-controlled. Her luxuriant artistic and literary information is never put obviously forward; nevertheless, unjustly perhaps, one cannot shake off a somewhat uncomfortable suspicion that a great deal of the book is the product rather of culture than of real human knowledge; that it has been approached by the circuitous way of the authorities, — Stendhal, Bourget, Henry James, — rather than by grubbing in life itself.

A matter of greater interest is to see whether Mrs. Wharton continues to maintain her attitude that fiction must be forced to accept its creator's arbitrary pattern, or whether she limits that view to short stories, and in the matter of novels ranges herself with those who deem objective reality alone of any value. Perhaps a safe answer to such questioning is to say that Mrs. Wharton has effected a compromise. She has undoubtedly tried to

catch living traits, and from her success in that respect the book has been treated as having a key; but she has also taken much of her color from her book-imbued imagination, possibly for fear of having drawn from life too closely. The motive for compromise, however, it is more likely, lies in a certain discord between Mrs. Wharton's talents. Her power of observation is admirably adapted to look directly at facts that lie before her; but her wit tempts her to satire, and satire is an unfortunate medium through which to study humanity. We may regard human beings as a superior or an inferior race of monkeys; but granting that they are monkeys, it would seem to be the business of the novelist, not to make gibes at them, not to confront them with more elaborately evolved standards of living, but to keep the story on the plane of monkey life. Satire, perhaps, is a natural temptation to any observer of life; but human inadequacy, inconsistency, folly, may well be left, as life leaves them, to be noticed, scorned, pitied, or ignored, according to the humor of the observer. Mrs. Wharton, in her early period, acquired a habit of using men and women as butts for satire, masks for a dia-

logue, candelabra for epigrams, — as something other than human beings living in and for themselves; and that habit is a hindrance in her present task of studying them humanly. With her talents, with her growth in artistic feeling, — a growth that is conspicuous throughout "The House of Mirth," — Mrs. Wharton will, no doubt, free herself from these trammels.

Even without the deflection of direct vision caused by such a habit, it is difficult for novelists to detect the essential traits in men and women. Those most fitted by nature for such insight require a wide range of study, a comparison of many species, an intimacy with many individuals of different education, different habits, different minds. Not that it is the business of a novelist to portray different species or diverging types; but men are so made that the finer characteristics in them, the fainter qualities, the nicer deviation of thought and action from the normal, can only be understood after studying such characteristics, qualities, or deviations where they exist with greater emphasis. And it is less easy for a woman than for a man — though nowadays sundry social exclusions and discriminations

have been boldly brushed aside — to pick and choose her objects of study. She is on the whole confined to those that come voluntarily within the range of her vision. Mrs. Wharton, it would appear, has been limited to one somewhat narrow species of men and women, a species in which, perhaps, human nature does not find its freest expression. For the purpose of portraiture any species serves as well as another, — our interest in an artist's perception of our fellow beings is inexhaustible, — but to enable an artist to acquire a knowledge of humanity one species is too narrow a field of study. As soon as Mrs. Wharton leaves the Trenor set (supposing that that set is taken from life), she is forced to draw, and always more and more, upon the stores of her imagination and of her general literary information. The Gormers, though they, to be sure, are but temporary wheels to roll the plot forward, evince a disinclination to become solid and substantial. Even Simon Rosedale, with all the advantages of individuality conferred by his race, offers a by no means irrefutable argument for his verisimilitude. Mrs. Norma Hatch flutters beyond the frontier of Mrs. Wharton's expe-

rience, and the charwoman, who as a *dea ex machina* shoves the plot onward, does so very unhandily.

A statement of the fact that Mrs. Wharton does not give to her characters the illusion of reality is no explanation of her motive in not doing so. One vaguely surmises that she feels she cannot attain the flashes of revelation of the great masters, and disdains the counterfeit procured by elaborate descriptions of petty details, and therefore rests content with her own individual, if arbitrary, representation of human life. But one has also a subsidiary feeling that it is safer to suspend judgment until one has approached this matter from another point.

This failure to observe the primary tenets of realism is not the only instance of Mrs. Wharton's disregard of ordinary rules; she does not adhere to the rule of inevitability. There is no inevitable connection between the last chapter of "The House of Mirth" and the first; the bottle of chloral may be the last link of a chain of which the visit to Selden's apartment is the first, but it does not fasten upon us a sense of necessary connection. The reader is in doubt as to the inter-

vening links; he snuffs, as it were, traces of indecision as to the termination of Lily's career. Some law-abiding readers resent the disregard of a rule they happen to know, but the ordinary mortal is comfortably pleased to experience the sentiment of suspense. A life when lived, a novel when published, are certain enough; why should not a novel in the making enjoy the liberty of what, even in life, appears an ample uncertainty ahead?

The reason for Mrs. Wharton's indecision must, perhaps, be sought in the episodical character of her vision; possibly in the difficulty of discovering the inevitable thread. A better solution, justified by the fact that it also explains her neglect of the commandment of realism, is that, as an artist, she finds neither rule of advantage to her, and therefore brushes them aside with the elegant ease of an American woman passing the customs. Certainly "The House of Mirth" shows a marked advance in acceptance of responsibility to art, a far larger sense of the value of composition, and a great increase of power in putting that sense to use. It is her feeling for composition that causes her to disregard both literary determinism and realism; these

she deliberately sacrifices for the sake of obtaining the desired emphasis upon the figure of central interest. All the minor characters in the novel are adjuncts and accessories, illustration and decoration, to display the commanding figure of Lily Bart; she stands conspicuous, and all the others derive their importance from their relations to her. What they do, say, and think, is done, said, and thought in order to explain and give a high relief to Lily Bart. This mastery of composition is the great artistic achievement of the book, and justifies its immense success.

Otherwise, except for this power of composition (which, indeed, will have to measure its strength with the old inadequacy of uniting episodes), Mrs. Wharton in "The House of Mirth" displays no new aptitude, no new sensitiveness, no new accomplishment. The plot, wholly apart from any question of determinism, is uninteresting, — if one may say this when so many episodes are extremely interesting. There is a monotony, due to the iteration of motive, like that in the dimly remembered figures of the Lancers at dancing-school, — "forward and back," ladies' chain, pirouetting, and so on, over and over, in

interminable sequence. Lily's behavior is mechanical; she whirls round and round, fresh and glittering, like waters in the upper basin of a fountain; then tumbles into the basin beneath, whirls and eddies with breaking bubbles, and tumbles again, and so down and down, until at last her continual falls from set to set sound painfully like a neglected faucet. One might suppose that this would produce what in current criticism is called the "note of inevitableness;" but it does not; the reader is continually expecting Mrs. Wharton to get up and turn it off.

This partial failure in the construction of the plot, so far as it is due neither to the episodical character of her vision nor to the imperious demands of composition, is because she lacks the talents of a story-teller; for Mrs. Wharton cannot, at least she certainly does not, put forward any claim to be a raconteur. In the short stories this lack was concealed by her mastery of the episode, but in "The House of Mirth" it is betrayed by the mechanical monotony that, even in all the brilliancy and glamour of episodes, of epigrams, of Lily herself, oppresses us with drowsy remembrances as of a too familiar tune.

The traits of a raconteur belong to persons richly endowed with bodily life and animal spirits, persons exhilarated by mere living, who receive accession of vigor from mere physical contact with other living things; but Mrs. Wharton, as an American woman, segregates herself from all this; she looks down on life from a tower, armed indeed with a powerful glass — the very strength of her lenses limits her field; — but though she observes individuals in the crowd below as if they were close, she does not touch them, she gets none of the physical aroma of immediate juxtaposition, which is so exciting to the born raconteur.

There is another element that one misses in "The House of Mirth," indeed, in all of Mrs. Wharton's books, — poetry. The reader perhaps is exacting, finical, greedy, if he asks for poetry; yet he is not without justification. There are modern novelists — Meredith's name alone would be authority enough — who look poetically at their subject, throw over it the haze of their own imagination. Mrs. Wharton cannot allege in defense the needs of realism; and if she did, there is poetry to be found in this real world, even in

New York,— to be found, at least, by poets. Lily herself might seem to be the very subject for poetic treatment,— so freely posed, so strongly modeled, so brilliantly lighted, so exalted on her pedestal, so persuasive in her physical beauty,— and yet so barren of poetic dower. The demand for poetry in a novel, however, is the idiosyncrasy of certain readers; there is no law, no plebiscite, no good reason that novels should be poetical; on the contrary, if a novel is to mirror ordinary life, especially if it is to mirror ordinary American life for American readers, it must deal in prose. The demand is, in fact, a mere subterfuge; it sneaks forward in place of an honest demand for a romantic novel. For, after all, are not novel-readers in the final allotment divided into two camps, divided by the two fundamentally diverse conceptions of fiction: the one of a world parallel to ours, rolling along with even pace, with like gestures, mimicking the wrinkles, the matter-of-factness of our old world, repeating our own doings, our own sayings, our own yawns; the other rounding out and filling in this defective world of daily experience, conceiving fiction as young Goethe or young Hugo con-

ceived it, catching for this poor, wrinkled, matter-of-fact earth a ray of that brightness which shone on the first day of creation? —

> The world's unwithered countenance
> Is bright as on Creation's day.

If this is so, can Mrs. Wharton be said to have taken sides? No doubt the school she consciously inclines to is that of the parallels; but she has diminished the effect of this inclination by her inobservance of the regulations of realism and determinism, which she has sacrificed for the sake of creating what the other camp may fairly claim is the romantic effect of Miss Bart towering above the other figures. The question, however, is of little consequence. The important thing is not to belong to a school or to obey rules, but to achieve; and the "House of Mirth" is a notable achievement.

Yet brilliant as the "House of Mirth" is in courage, dash, *élan*, it left one, when the immediate rush and glitter of the first reading were past, with a feeling that this achievement, admirable as it is, is most interesting in its promise of still more admirable achievement. One put down the book with an eager appetite for more, that recalls the time when

an impatient public counted the days before the next Thackeray or Dickens; and yet one's judgment begged for delay. Ripeness is all — *le talent n'est qu'une longue réflexion.* But one cannot bind the sweet influences of Pleiades; and the expectant public received the "Fruit of the Tree."

Balzac somewhere expresses a profound contempt for novelists who lack philosophy, who are unconscious of the relations which particular lives hold to life at large, to the motive power which animates us all, and which the ancients beheld under its aspect as fate. The relations between the individual and fate are the sternest of facts; a recognition of them is one of the elements that go to the making of a great novel; and in the "Fruit of the Tree" Mrs. Wharton, who has *le goût pour les grandes entreprises*, essays to indicate them. Of course Life, the animating power behind the scenes, must be symbolized in some way, taken in the concrete, embodied in law, religion, science, or social usage; and this is what Mrs. Wharton has done. The climax of the "Fruit of the Tree" is the same as in the old Greek tragedies; it is the discord between the individual heart and the great

throbs of fate. It is the struggle of Prometheus with the old gods; he sought to benefit his kind, and for this they chained him to the rock and opened his heart to the vulture. What to us is virtue, to them is sin; rebellion, until it becomes victorious, is wicked.

In the "Fruit of the Tree" a woman has been terribly hurt, nearly killed; her conscious life is reduced to mere physical agony and a primal brute desire to be rid of this agony. Medical skill can prolong her existence for days, perhaps for an indefinite period. Law, science, religion, and custom insist upon the utmost possible prolongation of the horrible, diabolical torture of life. The heroine, a trained nurse, cannot bear to see this useless suffering; she gives morphine at a time forbidden by the physicians, and rescues the sufferer from further pain. She defies the gods; but by this act of disobedience puts herself and her lover in their power. This part of the tale is very interesting. The scenes where the cruel gods through their ministers of punishment seize on the poor heroine are powerful and absorbing. Yet one cannot help thinking that the victim had many chances to escape, — a word to her husband would have

saved her, — but she is conscientiously adroit in putting herself in the way of punishment.

This tragic theme, which is or seems to be the gist of the book, does not come in until four hundred and thirty pages are past; till then there is not a sign on the horizon to suggest its existence, and one wanders along with uncertain steps, half doubting if one is on the right road. "Macbeth" opens with the witch's words, "When shall we three meet again?" and from that moment the air is heavy with the oppressive weight of tragedy to come. Is this long-drawn approach with its own events and interests an indication of Mrs. Wharton's old defect of not casting her story in one mould as a whole, of modeling two or three episodes and then soldering them together; or was it made on purpose to emphasize the climax? It certainly is necessary to the climax — the clash of the individual with the large laws of life — that the victims should be pure and spotless, like the heifers of a Greek sacrifice. The disobedient woman and her husband are noble, unselfish lovers of their kind, and as virtue nowadays is expressed in terms of new machinery, model tenements, and sanitary bandages, it

was necessary to show the hero in his model mill-town and the heroine in her hospital; but four hundred and thirty pages of approach are long in proportion to the rest of the book. One thinks that virtue might have been taken a little more for granted; but in that case perhaps the effect of Nemesis would have been diminished.

The serious purpose of the novel has carried Mrs. Wharton away from her old epigrammatic habit, from her purple patches of satirical description; it is only occasionally, as in the picture of Mr. Halford Gaines, that one recognizes her former careless, flippant brilliancy. The "Fruit of the Tree" is her first effort in a new manner. It is much less charming than the "Valley of Decision," much less brilliant than the "House of Mirth," less successful altogether, one would suppose, in its impression upon her public; but this book discloses a far more serious purpose of confronting and grappling life as it is. And yet, such is the perversity of readers, one feels a weak desire that she should go back to the dashing, glittering short stories, "all clinquant, all in gold," to the flash of epigram and the flare of satiric wit.

There has never been a time when so much fiction was written at so high a level as is written to-day; and in the open competition for fame different novelists have borne off different prizes, — one has secured the praise of subtlety, another of solidity, others of poetic feeling, insight, or profundity; but who that is writing to-day can dispute with Mrs. Wharton the title to the term brilliancy?

CERTAIN ASPECTS OF AMERICA

CERTAIN ASPECTS OF AMERICA

Gulliver (aside). What is Lilliput doing?

Lilliputian (in Gulliver's snuff-box). The life of this Giant is very dark and snuffy.

I

THERE is an opinion, at least a saying, current among us, that a great man steps forth when a nation needs him. This theory is very comfortable, especially in those parts of the world where great men are rare, for it follows that ordinary men behave themselves so wisely and so well that they have no need of a great man. It is a theory, however, that bristles with difficulties. Ancient nations have decayed and fallen to ruin; did not they need great men? Some nations to-day are losing vigor and vitality; do not they need great men? Has a nation ever been so great as it might have been, so noble as it might have been, so honorable as it might have been, or so rich and comfortable that it might not have been still more rich and yet more comfortable? Nevertheless, there is some truth in the saying. Our human nature is such that

if its most sensitive children hear the cry of human needs, their faculties pass, as it were, through a fire, become purged, hardened, and of a temper to do those deeds which we call great. In this sense a need does create the necessary man. It is not every human need, unfortunately, that has that creative power. Mere barrenness and want cannot create great men; neither can corporeal needs, they are too easily satisfied. Since Prometheus struck the first spark, neither corporeal needs, nor their derivatives, — ease, comfort, luxury, — have required great service. It is not a common need, but a penitential need, that brings forth the great man. Washington rose up, not because our forefathers needed to gain battles, but because they needed "a standard to which the wise and the just could repair;" Lincoln arose, not because our fathers needed statecraft, but because they needed "malice towards none; with charity for all." When a nation's want is deepened to desire, and desire is intensified into need, then that nation may hope that its need will create a great man. The fructifying need must be a yearning and a conscious need. In America we have no men whom we call great,

not because we have no needs, for we have profound needs, but because we are not conscious of them. We walk about as in a hypnotic spell, all unaware of our destitution. When we shall have opened our minds to our needs, we shall have done the first act toward ministering to them.

What is there to open our minds? Nature has provided a means through our affections. For ourselves, we are too old to perceive that which we lack, our habits are adjusted to privation, we are unconscious of the great needs of life; but if we let our thoughts dwell on those things which we desire for our children, then out of our vague notions, out of our uncertain hopes, out of our dim ambitions, definite wants will take shape, grow stronger and fiercer, till they develop into needs that must be satisfied. What is a son to a father's hope, — "in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!"

Hamlet gives our clue: our manners and behavior should be express and admirable; our actions should be like the angels', just and dutiful; our apprehension should be like

the gods', seeing the values of things as they truly are. Thus through affection we discover our real needs. But as they are only creations of imaginative insight, they are very placid. They do not disquiet us; they do not make us wriggle on our chairs, nor lie awake at night; nor do they take from cakes and ale their pristine interest. What can we do to nurse these Barmecide wants, to convert these embryonic desires into organic needs? Is not the first thing to speak out, and give them at least an existence in words; and, having put them into words, is not the second thing to speculate as to how they are affected, whether for success or for failure, by our American civilization? There is nothing unpatriotic in sociological inquiry. Civilization is organized effort to satisfy conscious needs, and we may naturally be curious to see how our American civilization affects unconscious needs, how it tends to make our manners gracious and admirable, to render our actions just and dutiful, to clarify our apprehension so that it shall behold life as it really is.

Yet there is a certain elementary feeling, akin to filial piety, which would naturally deter a right-minded man from any attempt

at expressing even the adumbration of his opinions concerning his country. If a friend were about to tumble into such a pitfall, — properly set for foreigners, — one would buttonhole him, urge him to desist, explain that his project was temerarious, or, if need be, make use of still more violent means. One would catch at everything, from superstition to coat-tails, to prevent such a display of sentimental deficiency. But every man is wiser for his friends than for himself. We seldom listen to the modest voice of self-criticism; we charge it with opportunism, cowardice, conservatism, or retrogression, and go on our own way.

The very difficulties and risks lend a zest to rashness. The America which I think I see may have been produced by applying a microscope to the street in which I live, till that be magnified to the requisite bulk; or it may be merely my own shadow cast on the clouds of my imagination by the simple machinery of ignorance and self-complacency. But when I consider my friend Brown, the manufacturer, and find that in his opinion America is the most magnificent of department stores; or Jones, of the militia, who

conceives her as a Lady Bountiful presenting liberty and democracy to Asia and Polynesia; or Robinson, the ship-builder, who beholds her, robed in oilskins, glorious queen of the seas, I reflect that perhaps to me, as well as to them, a little of the truth has been vouchsafed, and I am encouraged to use the American prerogative of looking with my own eyes to see what I can see.

II

The aims to which we would aspire for our sons are various, and require a various civilization, a manifold education. It is obvious, however, that our national life is not manifold, but single. The nation embodies to an astonishing degree the motto, *E Pluribus Unum*. Our civilization is single; it centres about the conception of life as a matter of industrial energy. This conception, at first hazily understood and imperfectly mastered, has now been firmly grasped, and is incorporate in our national civilization. Its final triumph is due to the generation which has been educated since the Civil War. Under that guidance material prosperity has dug the main channel for the torrent of our activities, and the current of

our life pours down, dragging even with the wind of its impetuosity the reluctance and sluggishness of conservatism. The combinations of business, the centralization of power, the growth of cities, the facility of locomotion, have decreed uniformity. Individuality, the creation of race and place, is wrenched from its home. The orange-grower from Florida keeps shop in Seattle, the schoolma'am from Maine marries a cow-puncher. All of us, under the assimilating influences of common ends, assume the composite type. The days of diversity are numbered. The Genius of industrial civilization defies the old rules by which life passed from homogeneity to heterogeneity; she takes men from all parts of Europe, — Latin, Teuton, Celt, and Slav, — trims, lops, and pinches, till she can squeeze them into the American mould. Miss Wilkins's New Englanders, Bret Harte's miners, Owen Wister's ranchmen, are passing away. The variegated surface of the earth has lost its power over us. Mountain, prairie, and ocean no longer mark their sons, no longer breed into them the sap of pine, the honey of clover, the savor of salt. This moulding influence does its work thoroughly and well;

it acts like that great process of nature in the insect world which M. Maeterlinck calls *l'esprit de la ruche*. The typical American becomes a power-house of force, of will, of determination. He dissipates no energy; as a drill bites into the rock, so he bores into his task.

This mighty burst of American industry is as magnificent in its way as Elizabethan poetry, or *Cinquecento* painting; naturally it excites admiration and enthusiasm. What brilliant manifestation of energy, of will, of courage, of devotion! Willy-nilly we shout hurrah. There stands America, bare-armed, deep-chested, with neck like a tower, engaged in this superb struggle to dominate Nature and put the elements into bondage to man. It is not strange that this spectacle is the greatest of influences, drawing the young like fishes in a net. Involuntarily all talents apply themselves to material production. No wonder that men of science no longer study Nature for Nature's sake, they must perforce put her powers into harness; no wonder that professors no longer teach knowledge for the sake of knowledge, they must make their students efficient factors in the industrial world; no

wonder that clergymen no longer preach repentance for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, they must turn churches into prosperous corporations, multiplying communicants, and distributing Christmas presents by the gross. Industrial civilization has decreed that statesmanship shall consist of schemes to make the nation richer, that presidents shall be elected with a view to the stock market, that literature shall keep close to the life of the average man, and that art shall become national by means of a protective tariff.

The process of this civilization is simple: the industrial habit of thought moulds the opinion of the majority, which rolls along, abstract and impersonal, gathering bulk, till its giant figure is saluted as the national conscience. As in an ecclesiastical state of society decrees of a council become articles of private faith, and men die for *homoiousian* or *election*, so, in America, the opinions of the majority, once pronounced, become primary rules of conduct. Take, for example, the central ethical doctrine of industrial thought, namely, that material production is the chief duty of man. That and other industrial dogmas, marshaled and systematized, supported by vigor-

ous men whose interest is identical with that of the dogmas, grow and develop; they harden and petrify; they attack dissent and criticism. This is no outward habit, but an inward plasticity of mind; the nervous American organism draws sunshine and health from each new decree of public opinion. This appears in our respect for the recorded opinion of the majority; in our submission to fashion; in the individual's indecision and impassivity until the round-robin reaches him; in the way that private judgment waits upon the critics and the press, while these hurriedly count noses.

Such a society, such educating forces, produce men of great vigor, virility, and capacity, but do not tend to make manners and behavior gracious and admirable, nor actions just and dutiful, nor apprehensions which see life in its reality.

III

If we pursue our examination of the educational tendencies of our industrial civilization, we perceive not only that they are single while the ends which we should seek are multiple, but also that industrial civilization, so far as it is not with us, is against us. For, according to the measure in which industrial interests

absorb the vital forces of the nation, other interests are of necessity neglected. This neglect betrays itself in feebleness, in monotony, in lack of individuality. Let us consider matters which concern the emotions, religion, or poetry; matters which, in order to attain the highest excellence, require passion. Now, passion is only possible when vital energy is thrown into emotion, and, as we have other uses for our vital energy, we find ourselves face to face with a dilemma: either to make up our minds to let our religion and our poetry — and all our emotional life — be without passion, or else to use a makeshift in its stead. What course have we chosen? Look at our religion; read our poetry; witness our national joy expressed in *papier-mâché* arches and Dewey celebrations, our national grief vented in proclamations and exaggeration. We have not boldness enough to fling overboard our inherited respect for passion, and to proclaim it unnecessary in religion and poetry, in grief and joy; and so we cast about for a makeshift, and adopt a conventional sentimentality, we mimic the expressions of passion (as in tableaux an actor poses for Laocoön), and combine a sincere desire to

ape accurately with an honest enjoyment in the occupation. Our conventional sentimentality is the consequence of economy of vital energy in our emotional life in order that we may concentrate all our powers in our industrial life.

Or let us look at our spiritual life, to see how that has been affected by this diversion of vital energy. Spiritual sturdiness shows itself in a close union between spiritual life and the ordinary business of living, while spiritual feebleness shows itself in the separation of spiritual life from the ordinary business of living. We get an inkling of the closeness of that union in this country by considering, for instance, our conception of a nation. In our hearts we believe that a nation consists of a multitude of men, joined in a corporate bond for the increase of material well-being, for the multiplication of luxury, for the free play of energy, at the expense, if need be, of the rest of the world. In countries which spare enough vital energy from industrial life to vivify spiritual life, other conceptions prevail. Mazzini defined a nation as a people united in a common duty toward the world; he even asserted that a

nation has a right to exist only because it helps men to work together for the good of humanity. Our conception of a nation shows that our spiritual life holds itself aloof from this workaday world and denies all concern with so terrestrial a thing as a nation. One cause of this spiritual feebleness is our irregularly developed morality, for spiritual life thrives on a complete and curious morality which essays all tasks, which claims jurisdiction over all things; but our morality, shaped and moulded for industrial purposes, is uneven and lopsided, and, as industrial civilization has but a limited use for morality, asserts but a limited jurisdiction. It has certain great qualities, for industrial civilization exacts severe, if limited, service from it; it has resolution, perseverance, courage. Subject our morality to difficulty or danger, and it comes out triumphant; but seek of it service, such as some form of self-abnegation, some devotion to idealism, which it does not understand, and it fails. Cribbed and confined by a narrow morality, our spiritual life sits like an absentee landlord, far from the turmoil and sweat of the day's work, enjoying the pleasures of rigid respectability.

Another proof of the lack of vitality in the parts remote from the national heart is our formlessness. An industrial society is loath to spare the efforts necessary to produce form. The nice excellencies which constitute form require an immense amount of work. The nearer the approach to perfection, the more intense is the labor, the less obvious the result, and to us who enjoy obvious results, who delight in the application of power to obvious physical purposes, the greater seems the waste of effort. The struggles of the artist to bridge the gap between his work and his idea look like fantastic writhings. We stare in troubled amazement at the idealist: —

> Alas, how is 't with you,
> That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
> And with the incorporal air do hold discourse ?

Read poetry, as the material in which form is readily perceived ; if we pass from the verse of Stephen Phillips, of Prudhomme, or of Carducci, to that of some American poet of to-day, we experience a sensation of tepidity and lassitude.

Or, consider the formlessness of our manners, which share the general debility of our

non-industrial life. Our morality is too cramped to refine them, our sense of art too rough to polish them, our emotional life too feeble to endow them with grace. The cause is not any native deficiency, — "We ought," as Lowell said fifty years ago, "to have produced the finest race of gentlemen in the world," — nor is it lack of that cultivation which comes from books, but it is the lack of that education which a man acquires by looking on life as a whole, by regarding himself, not as an implement or tool to achieve this or that particular thing, but as a human being facing a threefold task, physical, intellectual, and spiritual.

IV

This rapid evolution of the industrial type creates an unequal development, which appears in the contrast between different sets of our ideas. Those ideas which are used by industrial civilization are clear, definite, and exact, they show rigorous training and education; whereas ideas which have no industrial function to perform, being commonly out of work, degenerate into slatterns. Industrial civilization is like a schoolmaster with a

hobby, it throws its pedagogical energies into the instruction which it approves, and slurs the rest; in one part of the affairs of life, the reason, the understanding, the intelligence are kept on the alert, in another part no faculty except the memory is used. The result is frequent discrepancy between ideas expressed in action and ideas expressed in language.

This discrepancy appears in our political life. We have all learned by heart the Declaration of Independence, snatches from old speeches, — "give me liberty, or give me death;" tags from the Latin, —

Victrix causa diis placuit sed victa Catoni;

and maxims concerning inalienable rights, natural justice, God's will, — maxims whose use is confined to speech, — come from the memory trippingly to the tongue. Put us to action, make us do some political act, and we uncover another set of maxims, those whose use is confined to action: "The industrially fit ought to survive," "The elect of God are revealed by economic superiority," "Success is justified of her children," "The commandments of the majority are pure and holy."

If we are taxed with the discrepancy, we stare, and repeat the contrasted formulæ, one set in words, the other in actions; we are conscious of no inconsistency, we will give up neither. This is not a case of hypocrisy. We believe what we say; for belief with us is not necessarily a state of mind which compels action to accord with it, but often an heirloom to be treated with respect. Look at our Christianity: we honor riches, oppress our neighbors, keep a pecuniary account with righteousness, are puffed up, seek more than our own, and yet we honestly insist upon calling ourselves Christians.

It is the same with our social ideas. The American believes that all men are born free and equal, that they possess an inalienable right to pursue their own happiness; but if one questions one's casual neighbors one will find a contradiction between their professed beliefs and their real beliefs. They agree that men ought to be free: but the employer says his workmen shall not combine in trades unions, and the workman says all workmen in his trade must belong to the union. They agree that all men are equal: but the man of fashion thinks there is a marked inequality

between those whose fathers are rich and those whose fathers are poor; the Christian sees an inequality between himself and a Jew; the Southerner between himself and a negro; the man of European birth between himself and an Asiatic. Prosperous people in general believe their fellow men have an inalienable right to seek happiness, but deny them the right to seek happiness in socialism.

Take our practice in ethics. We believe in "millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute;" nevertheless, as directors or stockholders of a corporation, we buy immunity from hostile legislation. We believe in the brotherhood of man, but we use any means to save our corporate purse from removing stoves from our cars, from putting electric power to use in our tunnels, from providing seats for our shopgirls.

This capacity for self-deception extends far and wide, it honeycombs our thoughts and theories. We call our lack of manners liberty, our lack of distinction fraternity, our formless homogeneity equality. We think that industrial society, with its *carrière ouverte aux talents*, is democracy; in fact, it bears the relation to democracy which the Napoleonic

empire bore to the ideals of the French Revolution. We are none the less honest, — we are a people with a native love of phrases. Phraseology is that form of art which we understand the best. We cling to a phrase made by one of our patriot fathers, a phrase of the best period, — and no more dream of parting with it because it does not represent any living idea than a man would part with a Gainsborough portrait of his great-great-grandfather. It is like an ancestral chair in the parlor, not to be sat upon. We are justly proud of our heroic maxims; we shall teach them to negroes, Filipinos, Cubans, perhaps to the Chinese; we shall contribute them as our fine art to the world. Who can blame us? We have had our Revolution, our struggle with slavery; we have had Washington and Lincoln; we have had noble enthusiasms which have bequeathed to us a phraseology: and if we make parade of it, if we sentimentally cling to it, who can find fault?

V

One has moods, and as they shift, the image of America shifts too. At one time it appears, like Frankenstein's monster, to move its great

joints and irresistible muscles under the influence of ambitions and purposes that seem incomprehensible, as Hamlet's words about man drift through one's mind. At another time it appears young, brilliant, powerful, flushed with hope, full of great projects, flinging all its abounding energy into its tasks, which to-day are physical, but to-morrow shall be intellectual, and thereafter spiritual. Now it looks the danger, and now the liberator, of the world. But whichever view is correct, whether America shall fulfill our hopes or our fears, we are bound to do those humble and commonplace acts which may help our sons to meet the difficulties that lie between them and the fulfillment of our aspirations for them.

We see that absorption of our energies in material labor leaves great domains of human interest uncared for; we find that our emotional life is thin, that our sentimentality is ubiquitous; we find that our intelligence, when not devoted to business, is slovenly and trips us into self-deceit. The dangers are plain; how can we help ourselves? Surely with such an inexhaustible reservoir of will and energy, America might spare a little to

free her from sentimentality and save her from self-deceit.

We accept sentimentality, because we do not stop to consider whether our emotional life is worth an infusion of blood and vigor, rather than because we have deliberately decided that it is not. We neglect religion, because we cannot spare time to think what religion means, rather than because we judge it only worth a conventional lip service. We think poetry effeminate, because we do not read it, rather than because we believe its effect injurious. We have been swept off our feet by the brilliant success of our industrial civilization, and, blinded by vanity, we enumerate the list of our exports, we measure the swelling tide of our material prosperity; but we do not stop even to repeat to ourselves the names of other things. If we were to stop and reckon the values of idealism, of religion, of literature, if we were to weigh them in the balance against comfort, luxury, ease, we should begin to deliberate, and after deliberation some of us would be converted, for the difficulty confronting the typical American is not love of material things, but pride of power. He deems that will, force,

energy, resolution, perseverance, in the nature of things must be put to material ends, and that whatever may be the qualities and capacities put to use in science, philosophy, literature, religion, they are not those. Once persuade him that will, energy, and their fellow virtues will find full scope in those seemingly effeminate matters, and he will give them a share, if not a fair share, of his attention; for the American is little, if at all, more devoted to luxury, ease, and comfort than other men. But how is he to be buttonholed, how is he to be held long enough for arguments to be slipped into his ear? There is at hand the old, old helper, "the Cherub Contemplation." By its help man — for it takes him upon an eminence — sees all the great panorama of life at once, and discovers that it is a whole. Since the first conception of monotheism there has been no spiritual idea equal to that of the unity of life, for it asserts that spiritual things and material things are one and indivisible. Contemplation also teaches that action is not a substitute for virtue, that will, resolution, and energy take rank according to their aims; it leads man little by little to fix his mind upon the

notion that he ought to have a philosophy of life, and to live not unmindful of that philosophy, for a philosophy, however imperfect, is not likely to teach him that happiness and the meaning of life are to be found only in industrial matters, and if it should, well and good, for the aim of Contemplation is not to teach a man this belief or that, but to rescue him from the clutch of blind social forces, and let him choose his own path in life.

As our sentimentality is a sign that we have neglected great interests connected with the emotions, so our self-deceit is a sign that we have neglected great interests connected with the intellect. If our minds were used to study not merely material things, but also all other ideas that surround and vivify life, we should not be able to lead this amphibious existence of self-deceit, — half in words and half in deeds. As Contemplation is our help to see life as a whole, and our guide toward ripeness and completeness, so we may discover a help against self-deceit in the observance of Discipline. Discipline is the constant endeavor to understand, the continual grapple with all ideas, the study of unfamiliar things, the search for unity and truth; it is the

spirit which calls nothing common, which compels that deep respect for this seemingly infinite universe that the Bible calls the fear of the Lord. Discipline turns to account all labor, all experience, all pain; it is the path up the mountain of purgatory from the top of which Contemplation shows man life as a whole. On the intellectual side Discipline teaches us to keep distinct and separate the permanent and the transitory; on the moral side Discipline teaches us that right and wrong are not matters of sentimentality, that will and energy are untrustworthy guides. Discipline lies less in wooing success than in marriage to unsuccessful causes, unpopular aims, unflattering ends. Discipline is devotion to form; it teaches that everything, from clay to the thought of man, is capable of perfect form, and that the highest purpose of labor is to approach that form. Discipline will not let us narrow life to one or two ideas; it will not let us deceive ourselves, or put on the semblance of joy or grief like a Sunday coat.

For the holy Spirit of Discipline will flee deceit,
And remove from thoughts that are without understanding,
And will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in.

Discipline and Contemplation bring life to that ripeness which is the foundation of happiness, of righteousness, of great achievement; they are the means by which, while we wait for the inspiration and leadership of great men, we may hope to piece out the brilliant but imperfect education provided by our industrial civilization, and help our sons to become, in Lowell's proud words, "the finest race of gentlemen in the world."

EXILE

EXILE

Southern California has a wonderful climate. Day after day the sun rises, makes his diurnal course, and sets in the same cloudless serenity; day after day a royal blue covers the sky from mountain rim to the ocean's horizon; night after night the stars shine with the joy and freshness of new-created things. This immobility of splendor, this monotony of glory, begins at last to chafe one's spirit. Northern inconstancy cannot endure this sameness. The law of the North is eternal flux,—sequence of seasons, sunshine and showers, June and December, clouds and transparency. We of the North are but aliens here, temporary sojourners; we cannot become liegemen to the South. To this sensation of estrangement upon our part California exhibits absolute indifference. The royal shapes of this kingdom—the proud modulation of the earth from the flat borders of the placid ocean to the steep sides of the gray-green Sierras, the rising slopes, the swelling mounds, the languorous curves and hollows

of the foothills — proclaim haughtily, "California farà da se," "California is sufficient unto herself; stay or go as you please." In her hospitality, which seemed to the newcomer so prodigal, she opened her lovely arms but not her heart. We are admitted to her gardens, to her outer courts, welcomed to her fruits and flowers, the glistening oak leaf and silvery shining olive, to the music of the palm branches and the silken fringe of the eucalyptus acorns, with all the stately Spanish courtesy of this teeming land; but the central intimacy — the inner content, the complete appreciation — is reserved for the native-born. California's privacy is her own, and the stranger cannot enter. It might be guessed, with what justice I cannot tell, that this last barrier is mere illusion, or that we ourselves erect it. Perhaps the reserve that we impute to California is after all merely our own deficiency; for, in spite of this royal reception, this queenly hospitality, the sojourner from the North becomes homesick. California was created by nature in the full flood of a High Renaissance; Genii of the earth — a Bonifazio, a Paul Veronese — have been at work, with their gaudy beauty, their extravagance

of color, their prodigal portion of gorgeousness. There is too much; the thinner northern nature shrinks into itself, it cannot rest easy before this superb abundance, and hangs back like a shy child when fetched to a banquet. The inward eye turns to other scenes, to a lower scale of color, a meaner standard of beauty, a narrower range of sensation. This very richness keeps reminding us that we are exiles.

There is something wantonly capricious in humanity. At home we are impatient with tameness and familiarity; ennui — subtlest of creeping things — crawls up on its belly: "Why not eat of the rich fruit of the South?" We eat; and exile is our punishment. The stern officer of retribution, Homesickness, holds up a picture of what we have left. Not Veronese in all his splendor can paint as Homesickness paints. The old familiar scenes, refined, etherealized, transfused with light, quiver in an "intenser day:" — the little library, its time-stained, finger-spotted books, the broad windows, the narrow sward, the great elm, the slope down to the brook, the hill beyond, where the winter sun sets as if on the edge of Paradise. We hear the wind

whistling through the hemlocks, the dogs jumping and barking, Tom's boots creaking as he bears logs into the hall, all sweet as Christmas carols. Household figures come like bringers of a gospel. Neighbors pass,— the parson, the schoolmaster, the doctor, the grocer's man, the tinsmith's boy, the schoolgirl with her red muffler, the old lady across the way, the elderly cousin twice removed,— all Shakespearean characters; what life, what humanity, what diversity, what subtlety, what range and compass of affection and interest! How could we be blind to all this? What hung a curtain before our eyes? What put poison into familiarity? Why can we not perceive the worth of all our common things without its being necessary that the genius of life should take pain or sin "to stab our spirits broad awake"? Is this numbness, this blank stupidity, the work of the heart or of the head; is it egotism, fed on idleness and vulgarity, or is it the darkness of unimagination? Sometimes we do not open our eyes to the beauty of home until death has cut into it and marred it forever; no man can be too grateful to the genius of life that she wakes him up by the gentler stab of exile. Yet exile

though beneficent is stern; it makes its lessons effective. The vision of beauty left behind brings inseparably with it the conscious pain of absence. The exile cannot forget his maim.

But all exiles are not to blame. Some are banished by the tyrant, ill health; some by that other tyrant, poverty; and in old days some were banished by a tyrant king or demagogue. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good; and readers have got much good from that institution of exile. Some of the most touching pages of poetry are due to it. At times one grasps at the idea of banishing all our poets to see what would come of it. What is more loaded with feeling than Dante's lines: —

> Thou shalt leave everything loved most dearly;
> Thou shalt prove how salt the taste
> Of another man's bread, how hard a path it is
> To go up and down another man's stairs.

In those days exile was a serious matter. The exile lost his means of livelihood, and must earn his salt bread as best he might; and the very narrowness of his country, a few acres within encircling walls and a few square miles round about, gave love of it an intens-

ity that such men as we, whose country is a continent, cannot understand. His fellow citizens were all individuals; he knew all the members of his guild, all the prosperous merchants, all the great families, the Uberti, the Donati, the Cavalcanti, the Guidi, the Lamberti, their fortresses, their men-at-arms, their varlets, their link-bearers, the iron-work on their gates, the machicolations on their turrets, their incomes, their spendings, their animosities and affections. One thinks with a chill of that winter day on which Dante was banished from Florence, when he left wife and children, the familiar walls, the oft-trodden streets, the well-known fields, the olive orchards, the color-loving waters of the Arno, when he looked for the last time on the sweep of hills that half girdle Florence from San Miniato to Fiesole. From his grief and anger, better than from all the historians, we learn what Florence was, with her well-beloved baptistery, her churches, her towers, her pride in herself and her children's pride in her.

Ungrateful Florence, Dante sleeps afar,—

he would not go back unless he should receive the poet's crown in all honor from his self-

humbling fellow citizens; and the Florentines displayed no tendency toward self-humiliation.

Loneliness is the most poignant of sorrows, and the exile in California longs for sympathy and the company of other exiles as lonely as he. I betook myself to my one source of comfort, my landlord's library, and looked over the shelves to find some companion for my mood, but except for Dante and a few lines in Shakespeare I found little. There was Edward Everett Hale's story of "The Man Without a Country," but that did not square with my humor. At last I found, tucked away on a lower shelf with sundry Latin school books, an Ovid. The words "Allen & Greenough" were a talisman to evoke long slumbering memories. At Harvard College, in a time midway between nearness and real remoteness, there used to be a course in Latin, known as Latin II; twice a week a lot of boys struggled with the colloquies between Davos and Geta, as those two slaves for their part struggled to unravel the snarl in which their gay young masters, Romanized Greeks swaggering in Athens, had tangled their sweethearts, their fathers, and them-

selves. Terence's cribbed plots and borrowed characters, the old jokes and simulations of merriment, were a very lugubrious business between lectures; but when the boys had trooped in and ranged themselves noisily on the benches, had rotated like little dogs preparing to lie down, had kicked their nearest neighbors, had gazed about to see who was *cutting* and who had his trot beneath his desk; when the preliminary five minutes for adjustment of mind and body were up, a pleasant voice from the professor's desk asked Mr. X if he would render in English such and such a scene. Mr. X mumbled a few words, fumbled for his trot, tried to catch a whisper from behind, and flunked. At this the professor, in his pleasant voice, as if it were his turn to take up a thread most satisfactorily left by Mr. X, began to read in capital vernacular the old Roman dialogue, blending slang and colloquial phrases very much as certain notable *dramatis personæ* of Harvard at that time used to do, — Connors the dog fancier, Horace the Expressman, Billy the Postman, — and threw a glow of humor from his genial face over all the scene, until the poor old Latin mummies rose

up, limbered out, and walked. It was indeed a miracle; and in this care-dispelling, kindly way Professor Greenough went through life.

The reminiscences suggested by the words "Allen & Greenough" seemed to bring Ovid nearer; and yet what had I to do with the old Roman rhymester, with his hexameters and pentameters, his "Metamorphoses" and "Ars Amatoria"? However, as I met no other exile, I picked him up, Publius Ovidius Naso. He told his own story. He was a fashionable poet in Rome "under the good Augustus." His father, a gentleman of birth, brought his two sons to Rome to be educated. Both were intended for political careers, and both studied accordingly; but Publius dawdled over verses. The paternal warning was in vain. "Studium quid inutile temptas? Why waste your time over that stuff? Even Homer did not leave a penny." But Publius "lisped in numbers for the numbers came," and when his brother died he could afford *temptare inutile studium*. He frequented the older poets. He had the honor to read Macer's verses in manuscript. Propertius and he belonged to the same club; Ponticus, famous for his epic, and Bassus for his iambics, were his chums. There is great

autumnal pathos in this casual reference to forgotten names, like that when looking at urns discovered in a catacomb; the pleasure of affection, the pride of intimacy, the joy of youth and poetry, all obliterated two thousand years ago, and none but a few students (*studiosi comati*) to read even their names. Ovid saw the great Virgil — *Vergilium vidi tantum* — and listened to Horace recite his odes. Tibullus, to his regret, had died before his day. And as Ovid grew in distinction the younger poets frequented him in their turn.

It was a careless time. The riches of the world flowed into Rome, — taxes, tribute, slaves, merchants, officials, proselytizing priests, appellants, country gentlemen, provincial aristocrats, foreign princes, remote ambassadors; in this hothouse of peace and conquest palaces, temples, forums, arches, sprang up like mushrooms. The flash and flare of newly acquired riches, the push of social life, the fever of Cæsarian fortune, the dashing naughtiness of the Princess Julia, made fashion very gay. Many a time the young poets watched the rising sun gild the roof of the Capitol. Ovid was in the thick of amusement. He wrote his "Amores," be-

sides other amatory verse which in soberer moments he concluded to burn; he made songs in honor of Corinna (was she the Princess Julia?) that were sung throughout the town. His heart, he says, was very susceptible. To induce him to settle down, his parents got him a "worthless, useless wife." That union was brief; his second wife, though blameless, was also transitory; but the third was a true and loyal companion. At fifty he was a prosperous gentleman, a grandfather; his house was near the Capitol; his poems were famous throughout the Roman world, familiar to all the city; he himself was the centre of literary society; suddenly the god, Cæsar Augustus, hurled his thunderbolt, and Ovid was banished for life to the borders of the Black Sea.

The cause of his banishment — "folly, error, not willful wrong-doing" — was, he says, known to everybody, but discretion keeps him from mentioning it. It could not have been political, for no one profited by political stability more than Ovid; it could hardly have been making love to Princess Julia, for she was now forty-six years old, had been married successively to the three heirs to the

throne, Marcellus, Agrippa, and Tiberius, had grown-up children, and had herself been banished eleven years before. Perhaps he knew too much about Princess Julia the younger, and her reckless doings. The blow was wholly unexpected. "When the memory of that most wretched night, my last in the City, comes to me, even now tears drop from my eyes. The day was close at hand on which Cæsar commanded me to leave the furthest bounds of Italy; my mind was not ready, nor had I time, to prepare what was needed. I was not able to think of choosing servants or an attendant; I had no clothes nor belongings fit for exile. I was paralyzed, like a man struck by lightning. When at last grief cleared my mind and I had fully come to my senses, I bade a last good-by to my sorrowing friends, of whom (the many a little while ago) were left but two. My wife clung to me and wept more bitterly than I; tears rained down her cheeks. My daughter was far away in Africa, and did not know my fate. All over the house was wailing and sobbing; it was like a death scene, every corner of the house was wet with tears. The sounds of men and dogs (voices of the day)

died away; the moon drove her chariot on high; by her light I saw the Capitol close by my house (bootless proximity) and said, 'Ye Gods whose house is next to mine, ye Temples that I shall never see again, ye Gods of Great Rome, whom I must leave, farewell forever.' I prayed a prayer to the Gods; my wife prayed many, interrupting them with sobs. Stretched by our hearth, her hair all down, she kissed the dead embers with tremulous lips and prayed the household gods futile prayers for her lost husband. Then precipitate night cut short my dallying. . . . How often did I say, when they bade me hurry, 'Why urge me? think whither I go, think what I go from.' . . . Three times I reached the door, three times turned back. . . . I, living, must leave forever my living wife, my home, my kind and loyal household, my friends whom I have loved like a brother, hearts linked to mine by a heroic faith. One more embrace while it is possible. . . . I went as if I left my body; she, weighed down by grief, fell fainting in the house."

Poor fellow; luxury, flattery, good cheer, a house in town, a villa in the country, trained servants, jolly companions, fellow poets, ama-

tory verses, had not stored up any two-o'clock-in-the-morning courage. The voyage through the Ægean Sea and the Hellespont, and along the coast of the Black Sea, was terrifying in itself; and Tomi, a little town on the edge of the world, was peopled by Barbarian fishermen, Greek traders, Thracian peasants, Sarmatian boors. The Danube froze in winter, and Ovid constantly expected hostile tribes to make forays across the ice. In fact, Tomi was somewhat like Detroit in Pontiac's time. "Here, although my neighbors' weapons ring in my ears, I lighten my hard lot as much as I can by poetry. For, though there is no one to hear it, yet even so I cheat and pass the time. That I am alive and can bear these hardships I must thank you, Goddess of poetry; you comfort me; you are my ease from care; you are medicine to my blood; you are my guide and friend; you snatch me from the Danube and give me a place in the middle of Helicon." One can imagine the luckless Roman, shivering in rough bearskin coat, only his face out, his breath frozen on his beard, as he shuffled through the mud and snow, with images of Rome engraven on his heart, — the gold-topped Capitol on its high

eminence, the Forum Romanum, the Temple of Julius, the triumphal arch of Augustus, the Shrine of Vesta, the Sacra Via still echoing to Horace's feet, the stately palace of the Emperor on the Palatine. Every day and night he thought of his faithful wife; and he composed an epitaph for her to put on his tomb, if his ashes should have the fortune to be taken home: —

> Here lies the poet of Love and Coquetry,
> Ovid, who died from fault of his own wit;
> Forbear not, Passer-by, if thou hast loved,
> To say, "Soft rest his bones."

Ovid was no hero. Cato or Marcus Brutus would not have found the Black Sea border so barren. "The mind is its own place;" their Lares and Penates would have gone with them. But his exile is a mere allegory to teach us patience.

Exile is the course of life, — so wills the Omnipotent, — only for most of us it is a gradual process. Life is one long series of bans. First we are banished from babyhood, that wonderful time in which every minute brings its miracle, in which a ministering angel, with those slender, delicate, flowerlike implements of love, that men call hands, is

our constant slave; in the morning she begins, undoes the robes in which it has been our pleasure to while away the night, and plunges us into a glorious pond, placidly transparent on its milk-white bed, in which is the most marvelous playfellow, soft, clear, and friendly; this playfellow waits till we give the signal for the game, then splashes, dashes, giggles, rollicks, and, when we pound it and slap it, throws back into our faces little, glittering, rainbow-hued diamonds, soft and fresh as kisses. To all this we bid farewell forever. Next we are banished from our youth, from the nimbleness, the merriment, the infinity, the nobleness of boyhood. That was the great *Patria*, a very Rome, filled with heroic figures. Who does not remember, when he first went to school, standing on the edge of the football field and watching the godlike heroes play? There Hector, head down, all splashed with mud, his cheeks scarlet, his nose scratched, his jersey torn, dashed towards the Grecian goal; there mighty Achilles tackled and threw him; there Diomede, Ajax, and Menelaus charged the Trojan squad, while crafty Ulysses punted from behind, and Agamemnon yelled his angry orders. Never again

will the world be so full of demigods. From these heroic scenes the luckless boy was banished. His next exile was from the glorious kingdom of romance; there on the edge of the sacred grove, his breath held in, his heart beating hard, he saw — miracle of miracles — creatures, seemingly human and yet not boys, surely divine, Diana and her nymphs. He built an altar on the spot, and offered up his soul. Then came the stern decree; and so life makes its stages. We bid farewell to the sun-kissed top of Jupiter Capitolinus, shining triumphantly over a world of gayety and joy, shining indifferent to our departure; we kiss the dying embers of our sacred hearths; we eat the salt bread and climb the steep, steep stairs of exile. Is there no help? Has Cæsar Augustus power over all things? Can he banish us from "everything most dearly loved"?

At the very time that poor Ovid was eating out his heart on the shore of the Black Sea, there was a little boy teaching in the Temple at Jerusalem; and the fruit of his teaching was the abolition of exile, for he conceived the idea that the Kingdom of God is within us. It is an idea born of love; and, for the children of the spirit of God, it is truth. But

we, children of the dust of the earth, have no such kingdom within us. Within is emptiness; and so, without, we are slaves to inconstancy. We proceed from change to change, seeking peace; but place brings no comfort, time brings no consolation. We have lost and flung away our beliefs, but we cannot pluck from our hearts the seeds that consciousness of mortality has planted there; we are haunted by a voice, — *Omnia vanitas præter amare Deum et illi solo servire.* (Is Christ or is Death the God whom we ignorantly worship?) For those who hear that voice there is no ease in restlessness, no calm in change. Wherever they go, they feel that they are strangers and pilgrims.

The pagans enjoyed a cheerful, careless, animal content; they did not kneel, they stood on their feet erect, they were playmates of the gods and shared the Olympian disregard of morbid perplexities, sympathies, and aspirations. Ovid had no sickly perturbations, no uncertain hopes; his one desire was as clear and definite as Cæsar's head on a freshly-minted coin. Rome was his heaven.

California is pagan, too. When the sun sets and the dying day shakes its departing

glories from sea to beach, from beach to field, from field to mountain, the Franciscan monks (poor exiles from the past) creep out of their Missions and sing, *Ave Maria;* but California laughs. The Sierras, the foothills, the flowering slopes, the blossoming orchards, the budding gardens, laugh to the blue waters, and the sparkling waves laugh back. The oranges laugh in their orchards, the lemons in their dark green leaves, the olives in their silver gray, the guava and the plum tree, the passion-flower, the honeysuckle, the white rose, the violet, and the lily. They have no compassion, no longings for the impossible, no fears of the unknown; they live in the full glow of the radiant present, and laugh. They do not worship the Virgin; they claim no kinship with Christ. Their mother is the foam-born goddess of passion: —

Not as thine, not as thine was our mother — a blossom of flowering seas,

. . . . . .

For thine came pale and a maiden, and sister to sorrow; but ours,

Her deep hair heavily laden with odor and color of flowers,

White rose of the rose-white water, a silver splendor, a flame,

Bent down unto us that besought her, and earth grew sweet with her name.

For thine came weeping, a slave among slaves, and rejected; but she
Came flushed from the full-flushed wave, and imperial, her foot on the sea.
And the wonderful waters knew her, the winds and the viewless ways,
And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the sea-blue stream of the bays.

But the thin-blooded exile from the North, as he hears this exultant cry of passionate life, shrinks within himself, bows his head, and murmurs with his lips, *Ave Maria!* Blessed art thou among women, for thy Son had compassion on the exile and gave him the promise, the hope,—the illusion? —of a home.

CHARLES RUSSELL LOWELL

CHARLES RUSSELL LOWELL

A REPROACH of monotony, of failure to produce effects that quicken the imagination, is often made against this country; and the reproach, no doubt, is in a measure true. There is always rawness, want of perspective, lack of composition, where the great artist, Time, has not been long at work. Time changes every aspect, but he has freest scope in history. Here he diminishes and rubs out, or increases and lifts into bold relief; he disentangles his favorites from the many and sets them full in the foreground of attention, as if there had been but a few dozen men since the world began. So we may hope that in the course of centuries the history of America will be as interesting, as individual, as striking to the imagination, as that of Europe; and that our heroic age, the period of the Civil War, will be as epical as the struggle round Troy. But first much must be forgotten: the lesser men whose memories love and pride have guarded must be sacrificed to oblivion; thousands of gallant men must be left to nameless graves,

serving merely as numbers to magnify the glory of Time's favorites. Time will not botch his canvas with crowded figures; he chooses only such as can be readily moulded into some beautiful, imaginative, or heroic figure.

Among such figures, if one dare prophesy, will be that of Charles Russell Lowell. Mr. Edward W. Emerson,[1] by means of a handful of letters and the briefest of biographies, shows how Lowell already begins to detach himself from hundreds as brave as he, and to stand out in simple beauty, like one of the figures of ancient Greece.

In his background Mr. Emerson sketches that delightful group of young men, Shaw, Barlow, Higginson, Hallowell, Forbes, Russell, as well as the larger figures of Mr. John Murray Forbes and Governor Andrew; but none of these, except perhaps Shaw, has the classic quality of Lowell. Lowell shows the large freedom of the heroic age. He had no false modesty, no unnerving doubts, no skeptical theories, no sickly conscience. Leonidas did not stop to wonder whether Asiatic civi-

[1] *The Life and Letters of Charles Russell Lowell.* By Edward W. Emerson. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1907.

lization might be better for Greece and for the world; he did not weigh life against honor, nor hesitate to leave forever the fair face of his Spartan wife, the race, the chase, the colors of morning on the Spartan hills; he followed the high call of Fate and became immortal. Such a figure is Lowell. His honesty, his manly innocence, his unswerving faith, his singleness of purpose, his erect, young figure, full-facing duty, and his early death, are the stuff that Time the artist loves.

He was quite free from the straiter elements in New England tradition. To do, ποιεῖν, was his purpose, *to do* on that ideal plane where the worker, ποιητής, is a poet. He had the simple idea that every man must do what work he can in the labor of life, come what may. "My ambition," he says, "is to keep up my power of work, to be able to *toil terribly*, as Emerson says of Sir Walter Raleigh; for this I am always training." He rejoiced in the fact that the real rewards of labor are spiritual. When twenty he wrote, "The happiest afternoon I ever knew — I use the word happiest in its highest sense — was passed at an open window, the first of the season, filing away on cast iron. . . . Nothing can repay

a man for what he has done well except the doing of it. . . . The *Heroes* of the world have certainly needed work and had it and done it well, and it is Heroes that we must try to be." Yet there was no touch of Puritan self-sufficiency. During the war he wrote, "I have begun of late to doubt seriously whether I ever did anything right;" and later, "I am content not to look ahead very much, but to remain here quietly drilling."

His valor was of a similar simple, integral character. The surgeon of his regiment says of him in the field, "Such a noble scorn of death and danger they [his men] never saw before, and it inspired them with a courage that quailed at nothing. You may believe that my personal regard for Colonel Lowell colors this a little. You are mistaken; it is temperate and reliable." While Lowell lay stretched on a table, just before his death, paralyzed from the shoulders down, one of his officers was lying near him, dying, and oppressed by the agony of death. Lowell said to him, "I have always been able to count on you, you were always brave. Now you must meet this as you have the other trials — be steady — I count on you." In the presence of death he

shared with his comrade his own courage. Sir Philip Sidney, when he passed the cup of water to the dying man on the field of Zutphen, thought of the man's corporal pain; Lowell thought of the dying soldier's honor.

Lowell's courage was not that of the mere warrior, rejoicing in fight, like Diomede or Ajax. He took his part in the war with the simple idea that in the eternal strife between the higher and the lower a man must take sides. He wrote to a friend: "I fancy you feel much as I do about the profitableness of a soldier's life, and would not think of trying it, were it not for a muddled and twisted idea that somehow or other this fight is going to be one in which decent men ought to engage for the sake of humanity — I use the word in its ordinary sense. . . . There are nobler things to be done in this country than fighting."

Mr. Emerson sets Lowell's character into high relief by showing us the deep and varied happiness that he renounced. He knew the sweetest life had to give; he knew it, deeply enjoyed it, and gave it up. He took pleasure in many things. He appreciated the loveliness of the earth. In Florence he writes, "Here

am I with a stock of cheerfulness so great that my spirits verge on the idiotic;" in Paris, "Blessed be the man that invented words! I have *enjoyed* Paris. I have enjoyed immensely the Louvre and the Tuileries garden — Titian and Giorgione are as great in France as in Italy;" in Venice, "Yesterday, too, how could I write? I had just come from a picture by Tintoretto, a Venus and Bacchus, which . . . I might almost take as my aim, my ideal in life — and certainly it did give me a push, a swing, which I think I shall never entirely lose. The figure of Venus fills the same place in my idea of life that the Venus of Milo does in my religion." He enjoyed the exercise of the mind, reading Kant, Darwin, Buckle, Goethe, Ruskin, Carlyle, and the Elizabethan poets. He could speak French and Italian, and read German and Spanish. He loved horses and dogs; "Dogs are my weakness." But chief in his happiness were his friends, and the great affections of life. To his mother he wrote, "Try and help me to be a little more like what you saw me as a little child. . . . You must remember when you are well, I am well; you are the very root of my life now, and will be perhaps forever."

About a year before his death he married Miss Josephine Shaw, sister of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. "In these times," he said, "weddings are what they should be, quiet, simple, and sacred." From the front he wrote to her, "I don't want to be shot till I've had a chance to come home. I have no idea that I shall be hit, but I want so much not to be now, that it sometimes frightens me." Yet when Mrs. Lowell made plans for them after the war, for travels in Italy or Egypt, he answered, "We do not own ourselves, and have no right even to wish ourselves out of harness."

He was killed at the age of twenty-nine; she, then twenty years old, lived on for forty-one years, living as her husband had lived, spending herself in service, free from care for self, free from all that could cloud or obscure the nobility of life. While she lived she was so light-hearted, so interested in all sorts of things, so loving in all human relations, so careful of little duties, and took so much delight in the daily joys and recreations of life, that, blinded by the mere pleasure of her presence, one did not wholly realize the simple, heroic lines of her character. It is death,

and death only, that reveals the full nobility of a life. Her husband had felt the great law of human gravitation impelling him to the service of humanity; so did she. *Semper gaudens in Domino* she went about the city of New York, to right wrongs, to succor those in tribulation, to comfort the weak-hearted, to raise up those that had fallen, just as if it were ordinary business. Mr. Felix Adler applied to her a phrase from one of Longfellow's poems, "The Lady with the Lamp;" it was a happy phrase to choose. The lamp which Josephine Shaw Lowell held shed its own light on the objects it shone upon; in that light the refined became more refined, while the coarse, the vulgar, the mean, lost something of their baseness, and not in that moment only, for the lamp was a magic lamp, and where its light had fallen something luminous remained forever. Her story should be told, like the reminiscences of St. Francis by his disciples, in "Fioretti,"— little flowers of memory and imagination that blossom out of affection. Her visits to the needy, to grief-stricken women, to unfortunate girls, her efforts that the insane should be kindly and carefully tended, that alms to the poor should

do all good and no harm, that employers and laborers should deal fairly with one another, that justice should prevail in government, and honor in public affairs, could only be told in such stories. For it was not merely the things she did that made men and women love her, but the sweet womanliness of her presence, which graced her acts as fragrance graces lilies of the valley. St. Francis said, "God is always courteous," and she had that high attribute.

Through long service to the ideal, she learned to rejoice in the world as she found it, believing that such was the will of God. In spite of daily scenes of misery she was smiling and happy, joyful in her appointed place, seeming to say, like the Lady Piccarda in Dante's "Paradise:" —

> The quality of Love allays our will,
> It makes us only long for what we have,
> And lets us thirst for nothing else beside.
> If we should crave a higher place, our will
> Would be at discord with the Will of God
> That puts us here; and in these spheres there is
> No room for discord as thou see'st (if thou
> Canst see God's Nature), for to live in love
> Is here necessity. The life of Bliss
> Hath life alone within His Holy Will;
> And so our sep'rate wills are one through His.
> To be ranged as we are from sphere to sphere

> Throughout this realm, is joy to all this realm,
> And to our King, who forms our wills with His.
> And His Will is our peace ; it is the sea
> To which moves all that His Will doth create.

The Roman Catholic Church, in its interpretation of the desires and needs of mankind, has had the custom of expressing in its own ancient fashion the cry of affection for such women as she, acknowledging by canonization the general right and duty to honor, to venerate, to imitate. This practice, in that ancient mode, we have denied ourselves; but when we see a holy life lived among us, we feel the same gratitude, the same wish to venerate, the same recognition of righteousness that the Old World felt.

Mrs. Lowell's life is the poetry that celebrates her husband's heroism. By what she did his high purposes attained achievement at least in part, and through her — one may believe or hope — they will still remain fruitful and accomplishing. When men have once seen the heroic and the beautiful they can never again be utterly indifferent to them. Had it not been for her, General Lowell's figure would have remained that of the heroic young warrior dying for his country; but

from her we learn that the cause he had at heart was the larger cause of humanity. He was a soldier by accident as it were; he plunged into the war, as a man fords a stream in his way, for the sake of leading his fellows to a fairer country beyond, in which he and they in soberness and moderation should strive for a fuller, freer, juster sharing between one another of what life has to give. In this way he hoped to satisfy his great desire of discharging the debt under which, as he felt, he lay to other men. He was one of those of whom his admired poet Dante speaks: "All men on whom a Higher Nature has imprinted a love of what ought to be, esteem it their chief concern that, according to the measure in which they have been enriched by the toil of men who have gone before, they themselves must toil for the good of the men that come after them, so that these may be the richer because of them."

After finishing this little volume, after putting aside questionings, regrets, and longings for what might have been, one is left with a sense of comfort, of hope, of faith; for here is the life of an American who, as men of all ways of thinking will agree,

lived not for ambition, self-seeking, power, or glory, but for honor; and one feels, for the moment at least, the strong belief that Lowell's was not merely a life that is past, but the model of lives that are to be.

AMERICAN COLLEGES

AMERICAN COLLEGES

A COLLEGE, according to the common definition, is the place where certain general studies are taught, such as mathematics, the humanities, the sciences. According to a second definition, to be found rather in the minds of parents than in dictionaries, a college is an aggregate of influences which should act upon young men during the plastic years of adolescence, in such a way that on attaining manhood they shall be able to confront the world with success. It is this second definition rather than the first that chiefly concerns us.

Whichever definition we accept, however, we are at some loss by its means to distinguish a college from a university or from a school of technical instruction; and as the distinction between these institutions goes to the very root of my subject, it is necessary to emphasize it. A university, as the term is used in Germany, is a school for the circulation of learning, for research, for the evolution and cultivation of thought; in England,

it is a collection of colleges; with us, it is an aggregate of special schools, for law, medicine, theology, science, agriculture, forestry, and the like, in addition to a college or academic department. These special schools are not colleges; each is a kind of workshop to impart to a young man certain exact information and to cultivate in him certain definite capacities, in order to enable him to take an immediate place in the world of productive employment, to become at once a producer of wealth. A college is something very different from either a university or a technical school; it is intended to give what is called a liberal education.

This classification is plain enough on the surface, and none entertain any doubts as to the meaning of a learned education or of a technical education; but many people are confused and disagree as to what a liberal education means and what it should mean. There is a general notion that the distinction between it and a technical education corresponds to a difference of tastes between the undergraduates in the academic department and the undergraduates in a technical or scientific school. This may be true, but it does not

express the main distinction. Boys go to a technical school in order to fit themselves as soon as they can for filling a place in the economic constitution of society; whereas boys who do not need to become immediate producers of wealth have the privilege of a liberal education, that is, of an unpractical education so far as the immediate production of wealth is concerned. This distinction between boys whose primary interest is economic and boys who for three or four years are free to devote themselves to interests that are not economic is in the matter of education as broad and deep as the English Channel. What, then, is the meaning to be attached to the word *liberal?* What are the proper aims and purposes of those boys who are free from the bondage of immediate economic labor, free to think, free to act? An intimation, perhaps, can be got by approaching the question from another point of view.

In every society advanced beyond the stage of a mere grapple with physical needs and appetites, there are grave duties to be fulfilled. This is particularly true of America. In other countries the long results of time have bred in some men, numerous enough to constitute

a body, a sense of self-respect, of personal dignity, of duty to the neighborhood and to the community at large, of obligation to contribute whatever services or sacrifices may be necessary in order to maintain honorable traditions — some surrender of comfort, some relinquishment of ease, some acceptance of burdens for the sake of doing what they hold is required of them by their country, their family, their honor, their position, their education, or by some other form of duty. A man who in this sense is educated feels that because he has received good at the hands of those who have gone before, he must in his turn add to the sum of good for the benefit of those who come after, that he must pay his moral and spiritual debts. It may well be that such traditional ideas as prevail in England, for instance, when examined singly, would be found to contain much that seems to us unsuited to this country. But the principle holds true of this country, quite as much as of England, that the cause of higher civilization needs the steady support of a trained body of men.

There is, if one sets a high standard, little civilization anywhere that is to be praised very

highly, and still less that is wholly to be imitated; but there is always a vision ahead of what this world might be if those who have the greater opportunities in life would use them for the general good, would feel that their patriotic duties are as imperious as the need or greed for money, or any political or social ambition. America needs a body of men devoted to the general good, to raising standards everywhere: in business, in politics, in the arts, in literature, in scholarship, in the press, in the family, in the handicrafts, in amusements, in every part of life, both public and private. Such a body of men will not of itself spring into being full grown, like Athene from the head of Zeus; it must be slowly and patiently created. Here we have an intimation of the aim of a liberal education; and we can speculate with greater precision upon what kind and character of liberal education a college should give.

For generations colleges have been endowed and maintained to strengthen an ecclesiastical system, to encourage literature, and to perpetuate classes; but we have nothing to do with that; our business is to find out what traits and capacities we wish to develop in

our sons, what success we hope for them, what we desire them to do and to be. Before we can say what a college should be, we must honestly determine what we think is worth while in life; and this is no easy task, for to most people life is a confused jumble of custom, expediency, appetites, idealism, show, illusions, and fear of the unconventional. Yet the task must be performed. For ourselves we may rest content with easy ways and the ordinary ambitions of the world, but for our country we are more exacting, for our sons we lift ourselves to a higher plane. What is our ambition for our sons, and, through them, for our country?

All the questions that agitate the world of professors, instructors, and parents, such as the elective system, the humanities, or athletics, depend for their answers upon the answer to the earlier question, What is worth while in life? All theories of education run directly back to our fundamental beliefs. It is idle to discuss American, English, or German systems of universities, to talk of the freedom or licentiousness of the elective system, to develop theories of proctors, or fellows, until we have answered the fundamental

question, What is worth having and being in life? The answer to that must determine the course of a college education.

Here we must clearly distinguish between means and ends. The means which colleges employ in their attempt to educate are legacies from history. For instance, colleges have received as bequests from antecedent generations the thoughts and poetry of Greece and Rome. Those classics have their uses; they serve to provoke thought; they are still a part of the substance of knowledge; but more than for these reasons they have a value as being our common heritage. We, children of Europe and America, are all heirs of Greece and Rome; we are bred according to their ancient ways of thinking; we accept their ancient traditions; and by virtue of this common experience we attain to a sort of sense of kinship, of community, of a common home,—as brothers long separated in the world remember the home where they were boys together,—and so reach a sort of mutual understanding. In these ways the classics justify themselves. So do the sciences, mathematics, and history. They are not only useful to human beings on their earthly pilgrimage,

but they also create a resting place, an inn upon this pilgrimage, for the meeting of men's minds, where they may compare their common experiences, sympathies, and interests. But whatever means of education a college may adopt, they are but means; its end is to inculcate into young men an ambition to attain the things that are worth having and worth being in life. As to what those things are different people will have different notions; but certain things may be tentatively suggested.

The worthy things of life are to believe in something holy, to act bravely in the service of some great cause, to secure some intellectual interest, to look for happiness in pure affection, to possess a code of honor, and to have good manners. So the aim of a college, whatever it seemingly is busy about, whether the humanities, mathematics, or other studies, should be to teach boys that they are born with the privilege of being good, heroic, wise, pure, honorable gentlemen.

This view of a college has rather a rhetorical and fantastic sound; but if the end is worth aiming at, if we believe what we profess to believe, then we do not lack justifica-

tion in asking that a college should not rest content to veneer boys with a false and superficial semblance of education; and if, indeed, colleges would make the effort, they would not find it impossible, and perhaps not even difficult, to instill into students these ideals of what, for their country's sake, young men ought to do and to be.

Let us look at these ideals, then, one by one, to see if it is quixotic to ask a college to teach them: —

First. What is holy may be different in the eyes of different men; some may find it in God, some in mankind; some may reject the idea; but for those who can acquire it, a belief in holiness is the greatest of human experiences. To entertain it is a mysterious matter, which theology calls the operation of divine grace; yet those who go to the edge of the pool are most likely to gain the blessing of the angel who comes down to trouble the water. The mind must be trained to abstract thought, the will taught to govern the appetites, the attention must be turned steadfastly to the largest motives. The "martyr soul" may be the experience of the very few; rapture may be confined to the most profound

moments of life; but a noble isolation from unworthy things, an abiding admiration for those lonely souls who have greatly loved, a sense of what humanity may attain to, together with humility, reverence, and indifference to all unworthy forms of power, may be, in a measure at least, acquired. Plato, Isaiah, Dante, and Emerson will not leave a boy unmoved; a mere familiarity with their sonorous words bids him aspire; they endue him with their own uplifting grace, and render impossible a complete surrender to vulgar satisfactions. The boy may seem to stare blindly at uncomprehended things, but he unwittingly takes away something that will befriend him in his hour of spiritual need.

Second. It may be difficult to enroll one's self in the service of a great cause; but it is not beyond the reach of youth. Men of science acquire a passion for truth; they esteem the conventional rewards of life as nothing in comparison with the discovery of some new law. An archæologist, an entomologist, an astronomer will rivet his attention for years on some apparently insignificant phenomenon in the hope that he shall force it one day to shed what light it can upon the great scheme

of things. Art, too, has its passionate votaries; the musician, the painter, the sculptor become oblivious of all except the idea of beauty that possesses them, and yield themselves wholly to its imperious command to give that beauty form. Zeal for the cause of truth or of beauty may perhaps be reserved for nature's favorites; but there is one cause that all men are entitled to claim as theirs, not by virtue of special talents or accomplishments, but by virtue of their birth, — the cause of humanity.

Boys in the period of adolescence are potential creatures, their characters rest in unstable equilibrium, uncertain which way to incline; they are like little flowers under a hedge that crane their necks this way or that to reach the sunlight that peeps through the branches. They vary in flexibility, no doubt, and some have tendencies to this direction, some to that; but all are pliant, plastic to the moulding power of proximate beliefs. All boys are sensitive to idealism. Each, in his individual boyhood, goes through the history of the race; he has his profound emotional periods, when he is ready to fling away all he has and follow an ideal that will speak to

him with authority. Boys need but the contagion of some high example to transfuse into a generous and public spirit the energies wasted on the football field or squandered in reveling. Some are stirred by the elementary emotion that springs from a community of blood, of speech, of boundaries; some by the gross injustice between class and class or between man and man; some by ideas of liberty, of equality, of a universal brotherhood; some by the sorrows and privations of their fellows. Such feelings swelling in their boyish hearts demand an outlet for relief; they torment the boy until he turns his face toward some attempt to remedy a wrong. The State, — Cato, Hampden, George Washington, Lincoln; the Church, — St. Paul, Luther, Wesley, Phillips Brooks; political economy, — Robert Owen, Fourier, Karl Marx, Henry George, stand up before them, all seeming to offer means; and the emotional boys press to take hold.

Third. Intellectual curiosity, — the desire to comprehend, the wish to feel the buoyancy that comes from knowledge, the longing to enjoy freedom from cramping opinions, the appetites of reason and imagination, the hun-

ger for information because it is a beneficent force, — this is a power whose service is freedom. It can never provoke satiety. Though it proceeds from ignorance to ignorance, making the unknown more and more visible, and at best can do no more than show what there is "deep and dazzling" in darkness; yet it may be the strongest power in a man's life and hold out happiness in both its hands. Young men follow Darwin, Pasteur, Weismann, Haeckel, Mommsen, Harnack, with the self-forgetful devotion that we read of in the Harvard Memorial Biographies.

Fourth. To look for happiness in the pure affections may be thought to be instruction that home only can teach. But boys of eighteen are still waxen models, not yet set, not yet unimpressionable. A college can either confirm or wipe away impressions first imprinted at home. The college itself is the direct descendant of the old monastic system, under which men gathered together to help one another escape the soils of the world and the flesh. It should contain some secluded and cloistered quadrangle; in which the worship of gross divinities dwindles and dies out; in which the vulgar standards of a coarse civili-

zation cannot set themselves up; at whose gates the cares, the interests, the activities of the world knock in vain; where little by little the influence of what is hoped for, prayed for, and striven for, purifies and ennobles the spirit; where the records of heroic souls inspire and quicken the need of giving and receiving holy affection; where the memory of the visions beheld by the pure in heart still lingers.

Fifth. Honor, perhaps because it is associated in the public mind with old ideas of dueling and paying gambling debts, and in general with the habits, good and bad, of a privileged class, is not in high repute with a modern industrial community, where bankruptcy laws, the letter of the statute book, the current morality of an easy-going, good-natured, success-loving people, mark out a smoother path. But the business of a college is not to fit the boy for the world, but to fit him to mould the world to his ideal. Honor is not necessarily old-fashioned and antiquated; it will adapt itself to the present and to the future. If it is arbitrary, or at least has an arbitrary element, so are most codes of law. If honor belongs to a privileged

class, it is because it makes a privileged class: a body of men whose privilege it is to speak out in the scorn of consequence, to keep an oath to their own hurt, to remain loyal to unpopular causes and painful truths, to maintain faith even with the devil, and not swerve for rewards, prizes, popularity, or any of the blandishments of success. Because it is arbitrary, because it has rules, it needs to be taught. To teach a code of honor is one of the main purposes of education; a college cannot say, "We teach academic studies," and throw the responsibility for honor on parents, on preliminary schools, on undergraduate opinion, on each boy's conscience. Honor is taught by the companionship, the standards, the ideals, the talk, the actions of honorable men; it is taught by honoring honorable failure and turning the back on all manner of dishonorable success.

Sixth. Manners, too, in a large sense are a main part of education. Our lives are a series of meetings and greetings; with some people we tarry a long time, but the parting must come early or late; with others we stay for a season; with most for a moment or two only. These meetings are the stuff that out-

ward existence is made of. If our conduct during these meetings is good, if our acts and words, our reticence and our serenity reveal the teachings of true education, — a passion for justice, a love of truth, a hunger for pure affection, a steadfastness of honor, — then our manners are a success; if we cannot reveal any of these possessions that make us worth meeting, either because we have not acquired them or because we cannot express them, then our manners are failures. Manners constitute the one fine art open to all. There is nothing more admirable than the transparency of a noble nature through its corporeal covering; when words, face, and carriage reveal the personality within. The best way of teaching good manners is to fashion the character.

Character loves to express itself; like a playwright, it trains and drills the players in the drama of life — eye, tongue, lips — so that they shall express its full meaning. The exercise of any organ strengthens that organ; habitual expression of what should be leaves some spiritual distillation behind, and forms and quickens the powers within. Clear language helps clear thought; a large range of

words gives freedom to the mind; the arrest of over-hasty speech aids self-control; a healthy body makes a healthy mind; even decent garments help self-respect. Men are imitative creatures, they mimic the good as easily as the bad and remember it as lastingly; a child can learn French as readily as Choctaw, and becomes familiar with the Elgin marbles as quickly as with Totem poles. In the education of every species of animals imitation is a main factor; and a college faculty should be a collection of men whom it is desirable to imitate; let such men speak in the college halls and walk through the college yard, and then imitation may be restored to its proper place in the education of our youth.

Professors and instructors are too much dominated by the notion that they are appointed to teach so much history, so much Latin grammar, so much chemistry, so much English literature; that they are to impart to the young men committed to their charge sufficient information to enable them to pass examinations, to write a creditable thesis, or to enter Johns Hopkins University; or (when animated by unusual ambition) that they

shall try to instill into students a taste for their subjects. This is to observe the letter and violate the spirit of their calling; it is to accept a college as a mere machine for imparting information. The idealism of the country expects them to do far more, and they excuse themselves by a certificate of good conduct from a gross public that has no ideals except good-nature and money. The studies that they teach are not ends in themselves. The primary purpose of a college is to animate a boy with high ideals; to develop his intelligence and strengthen his will in order to enable him to give those ideals a habitation and a form; to make the boy a factor in expanding our cramped social state so that men and women may stand on their feet in ampler humanity.

Idealism may be developed anywhere; in newsboys hawking papers on Broadway, in young fellows learning to be stevedores around the docks, in boys who cart manure on a farm. But a college has an advantage over such courses of instruction as those; it is not led astray by the need of fixing the attention primarily on the efficiency of action; it is free to take another view of character than

as a successful tool in self-seeking, free to infuse into the practical virtues — industry, perseverance, courage, energy — a nobler element, to round them out with a metaphysical scope and purpose. If there were any textbook, any manual occupation, any service, refined or menial, that would teach idealism, the task would be easy enough. But idealism can only be taught indirectly, and therefore colleges must go about their business indirectly, and may very well occupy themselves with two secondary purposes, training the mind and developing the body, always keeping in view their ulterior object, — to instill into their students by devious and subtle ways, by the contagion of companionship, by the suggestion of example, a conception of what is worth having and worth being in life.

The reason why this commonplace assignment of a college's duties sounds rhetorical and fantastic is that colleges have swung from their moorings, letting themselves drift with the swift current of the commercial stream. Since our Civil War the production of wealth has occupied the ablest minds and the strongest characters. Our lack of tradi-

tion, our lack of old institutions linking us to the past, our lack of inherited habits and customs, our lack of that homogeneous character which steadies a nation, our lack of education, have all prepared the way for the simple autocracy of money. Americans very likely are no more greedy by nature than other people, but we have no imagination (except inventiveness) and little self-respect; we are under the sway of fashion, and it is very fashionable to get money. What should be the great conservative forces have been thrown down by the rush for cotton, gold, copper, and oil; our literature, feeble at best as a national force, has bent to the yoke of money-getting; our churches, far too much, have become the almoners of the great *condottieri* of industry and finance; and our colleges try hard to better the example shown to them. The cry of colleges is, "Money, money, give us money!"

Money, no doubt, and incessant begging for money, are to be judged by the use to which the money is put. The heads of colleges, like the directors and officers of great business concerns, are wont to put money to good uses, practicing such economy as is con-

sistent with luxury and ostentation. They build larger halls, more ample laboratories; they erect more museums and stock them with richer and more diversified objects; they buy casts, maps, and models for the classical studies; they collect libraries and establish theatres for the modern languages; they put up new apparatus for experiments in physics, chemistry, and psychology; they send out expeditions of geologists, archæologists, civil engineers. A president's report reads like the prospectus of a new ocean steamship, with its gymnasium, lifts, barber shop, swimming-pool, Turkish baths, library, card-room, grill-room, café, and cabins resplendent with gilt and mirrors. Is it, however, so certain that there is a royal road to knowledge which the mere magic of money throws open to all? Does this process of smoothing, grading, tunneling, and cutting down obstacles really render knowledge more accessible to boys? Are not the college authorities affected, subconsciously affected, by the comfortable warmth of our material prosperity, by our national satisfaction in bigness and numbers, and by a desire to keep abreast of or to excel their rivals? Aids to

education are, of course, altogether desirable; it is just, too, that professors and instructors should have their share in our national prosperity; and it is true that the edifice of learning rests on a substructure of property; but do these indisputable propositions put together constitute the whole truth? Are character, devotion to an ideal, self-surrender to service, consecration to large purposes, increased by such multiplication of possessions, such embellishments of the shell and husk of things? Is not the partial truth, that money is necessary, inferior to the great truth, that money and all that money can buy must be subordinated to those things that money cannot buy?

All will agree that physical conditions must square with the demands of health and the needs of instruction, that professors and instructors should receive proper salaries, that a college should have all things suitable to make it a fit and even a memorable place for boys to pass their impressionable years; but this is the beginning of preparation for education, not the end. There is the practical, and there is also the ideal. Money can serve practical needs; ideal needs can only be min-

istered to by men who are animated by enthusiasm for the ideal. A high personality is the first requisite in a teacher. The business of a college president is to go forth and seek men with high personalities, children of the ideal, men who fix their hearts and minds on truth, wisdom, justice, and beauty, who do not care a fig for luxury or comfort, but feel the breath of heaven about their heads. If a college president becomes an apostle of the ideal, men of this sort will turn to him instinctively, and all boys worth attracting will be drawn to them. There is an immense mass of boyish idealism scattered here and there through the country, only waiting for a call to wake it to consciousness and to action. There are thousands of boys who had rather live in huts with men whom they reverence, for the sake of sharing their company, their wisdom, and their visions, than live in the most elaborately equipped universities and be taught a multifarious aggregate of information by the most prosperous professors.

It is, I admit, difficult to say where the practical should end and the ideal begin. Perhaps the two ought to be more interpenetrated with each other than they commonly appear

to be. Idealists forget that men are but partially civilized animals, and practical men forget that idealists are the greatest benefactors of the race. But in the case of colleges some demarcation can be attempted. A line may be drawn between those whose functions are to provide the substructure of property, and those whose functions are to build the palace of idealism on top. There can easily be two distinct managements. Let the federal government, the holding corporation, be the general provider, replenish the purse, and control the relations between the college and the schools that compose the university, as well as the university's relations with the outside world; let the college govern itself and be free to pursue its own ideal ends, unhampered by business cares. Let the two be separate, like our nation and its component states. The business of the whole university requires men of action, of affairs, of practical capacity and experience; the business of a college requires the enthusiasm of idealists. If this division of jurisdiction is not sufficiently thoroughgoing, let the academic department be broken up into several colleges, or several self-governing halls, so that there shall be

opportunity for one college, or one hall at least, to set its heart on teaching its students the things that are worth while in life.

Nowhere are there such opportunities for high patriotism as in our colleges; nowhere else are there such grave responsibilities. Where is the home of idealism except in a college? In the world the coarseness of routine, the push of ambition, the importunity of the immediate present, the mechanism of business activity, the fierceness of poverty and the ferocity of wealth, dash the idealist aside and hurry onward. The world has always been the world. The idealists have never belonged to it; they have always been sequestered and cloistered in their own high thoughts; and in their solitude they have wrought the ideals on which we live.

At the present time the best hopes of idealism are centred in the congregations of young men who live, in the glorious freshness of youth, apart from the temptations of the world. But these young men, with the benediction from their mothers still on their foreheads, with their young, passionate hearts eager for the highest, find themselves, on the very steps of the college halls, confronted

with notions of life begotten in what is called practical life. No doubt we all are to blame. We all lack that faith which is the expectation of nobler things, interpenetrated and fortified by the resolution to bring those nobler things to pass. We need a man of stern and heroic temper, some Martin Luther, who will not bow down to the hierarchy of worldly success, who will not subscribe to the creed of ostentation nor to the dogmas of luxury, but who believes that man lives by faith; who believes that faith is the prerogative of youth, and that it is the business of teachers to uphold the standards that alone can make this country what those who love her wish her to be.

A GAP IN EDUCATION

A GAP IN EDUCATION

I

EDUCATION is the working of all forces that fashion a man during the plastic years, before his habits become fixed and his character determined. No one can escape education, even if he would; whatever may be his lot, his spirit will be led toward one desire or another, his mind will fasten and feed upon some chosen thoughts, his heart will make something dear to itself. There is a natural division of education into two parts. One part is the domain of chance; it is compact of the manifold influences, the countless subtle happenings, which press about a man like the atmosphere. The other part is the domain of instruction, and is subject to the deliberate purpose of the teacher. Since the part under our control is the smaller, so much the more does it deserve careful thought and plain speech.

It would be curious to construct in our minds a youth, of an age from twelve years to twenty-two, out of materials furnished by discussions concerning the proper education

for him. We hear about primary and secondary education, about periods and times for preparatory, academic, and special studies, about cultivating observation and imagination, about literature and science, about athletics, about the elective system, about religious worship. Some say that a young man should be turned into an instrument to ascertain truth; some say, into an instrument to increase wealth; others, that he should learn, in this way or in that, to minister to a particular need of society; others, that he should be made a gentleman, a good citizen, a Christian. Out of all these things rises up a creature quite different from the young human animal that we know. Education, indeed, as it is conducted in most schools and colleges, recognizes that boys are animals as far as physical exercises are concerned; it watches over their muscles, digestions, lungs, throats, and eyes; but it pays little or no heed to the law of nature which has most educational influence and is enforced by the strongest sanction, — "Thou shalt be fruitful and multiply." Civilization, in the process of ten thousand years, has established the institution of the family, with its corollaries of marriage and mono-

gamy, and has gone so far as to issue stern edicts concerning chastity against the sex that is less able and less likely to disobey. But education, the narrow education of parental and pedagogical instruction, has done little or nothing for boys.

From what masters of education say, we should suppose boys to be sexless, were it not for sundry regulations (matters of police), and for certain customary assurances that sons will be carefully protected. The reason that education is silent upon this subject is in part because masters, in both schools and colleges, deem it the parents' affair, and parents toss it back to the masters. The fault belongs to both. One strand of education cannot be separated from the other strands. Teachers are not free to say to fathers, "You are responsible for this wisp in the rope." They are not workmen whose concern is bounded by the section of a boy's life committed to their care. Masters and parents constitute a crew, all working together; the success of one is of little value without the success of all, and worse than useless if it interferes with the success of the others. A bow oar might as well say, "What have I to do with stroke?" as the school-

master say, "What have I to do with the boy at college?" School and college and parent are all working together,—working to fashion a man.

If the masters are at fault, fathers are far more to blame. The duty of using as an educational force the power given by this commandment rests upon them. They cannot shift it from their shoulders. It is bound on the father's back by the birth of his son, and he cannot release himself by putting another man in his place. He must answer for every act and for every omission of the factor to whom he has intrusted his son. If a son does wrong, if he goes to the devil, the father must be adjudged an accomplice before the fact. It is not safe to let this duty be of less than absolute obligation.

II

What is it that shuts our mouths upon this great problem of education? During the long centuries in which decency, manners, and refinement have been struggling with our animal nature; while the conception of home with one wife, with children gathered together, has been contending with the deep-

rooted influences of savage customs; while the spiritual has been fighting with the bestial; it was natural that all means to win the contest should have been laid hold upon, — some wise and noble, some less wise and less noble. Jealousy, love of dominion, asceticism, monasticism, celibacy, have all been instruments in the evolution of modesty. These instruments have served well, and have much yet to accomplish; nevertheless, it was almost inevitable that, in the evolution of modesty, other qualities of an allied nature, distorted and misshapen likenesses, — prudery, shamefacedness, false modesty, — should also have been produced. These mock virtues, too, may have done good service in maintaining an outward semblance of respect for the real virtue; but they have done harm by taking to themselves part of the honor due to their original, and by confounding notions so that men mistake false modesty for modesty, shamefacedness for decency, prudery for virtue. Thus a notion has grown strong in this country that decent people should not talk openly upon matters of sex, but should throw a cloak over them and keep them out of sight and hearing.

If prudery, shamefacedness, and false modesty have given us the grace of virgin innocence, we must respect them accordingly; if, by maintaining seclusion and holding back knowledge, they have built a fence around that grace in the leastwise helpful to its growth, we must be most considerate before we lay a finger on them. But when we have once made up our minds that here is mere confusion of thought, that *life* is the rock on which everything is founded, that "more life, and fuller," is what we want, that the powers of life are good, and that only by perversion can they be turned to ill; then we must respect the powers of life as pure, and we must treat vulgar disbelief as infidelity to the spirit of life. Real modesty misunderstood, false shame, fear of derision, have kept fathers from facing this problem of education. We must turn about. We must cast off prudery for the sake of modesty; we must draw our feet out of the stocks of inherited shamefacedness. For our sons' sake we must recognize and proclaim that this passion is good, not bad; that it can be put to noble uses; that it must be put to noble uses. We must teach our sons that the sources of life constitute the

most sacred things we know, that therefore the union of man and woman is a sacrament. Yet we need not be impatient with those who cannot accept this faith at once. We must always remember that men reckless of chastity have been good and great, — poets, heroes, — men who have toiled and denied themselves for their fellows, and have an unshakable title to our gratitude; we know that countless men in private and obscure life are reckless of chastity, who are just, kind, simple, and upright. We are not blind to man as he is, but we ought not to tolerate a system of education which either ignores this passion or treats it as of the devil, and does not try to put it to noble use.

Every man knows what current education is in this regard, what kind of teachings boys at college receive from their fathers. Those fathers, for this purpose, may be divided into two classes. There is the refined, sensitive father, who hates vice and turns his back upon it, pretending to himself that, by some process of subconscious instruction, his son will learn from him how odious it is. He sends his son to school, and from school to college, advising him about Latin and Greek,

about physics and chemistry, about history and art, and other petty matters of education. Equipped with platitudes concerning virtue, his son goes forth into a world where the union of man and woman is not recognized as a sacrament, to hear boon companions plead for vice with all the persuasiveness of youth and gayety. This father willfully hands over his son to the great educating force of sexual desire, which he knows is stretching out its hands to the boy, which he knows is bound to lead him higher or lower. Then there is the coarse father, who accepts the period of puberty as one of the corridors or gardens of life, through which his son must pass. He hopes that the lad will make merry without vexation to himself. He warns him against disease and against the police court. So each father hands down his tradition to his son; and education busies itself with classics, mathematics, boat races, and special studies.

Quitting their fathers, our boys, our young animals,—even the most carefully guarded, the most tenderly prayed for,—go forth and find our cities, our towns, even our villages, swarming with prostitutes, while ladies gather up their skirts and drop their veils, and gen-

tlemen laugh and wink, and public opinion puts forth conventional protest. Here is a course of study which is not set down in the college catalogue. Then, too, our boys read the experience of men bred without, or maybe stripped of, what they call illusions, men of the world, Epicureans,—a Boccaccio, a Maupassant, a D' Annunzio,—and accept their books as truth and honesty, as the casting out of hypocrisy and humbug. They learn that there are familiar conceptions of life in which this sacrament is deemed a jocose matter of physical pleasure; and that, too, by men successful in the management of affairs and high in the community's esteem. They suspect that modesty is a priestly contrivance, approved by mothers, old maids, and silly men who are ignorant or forgetful of life. In this way the sexual instinct educates them, and this great power for good is suffered to be a hindrance and a hurt. What can fathers and mothers do?

III

We can at least outline some course of action which will save us from the ignominy of doing nothing. When the first curious questioning concerning sex comes into a boy's

mind, who should answer it but the parents? That questioning will come. We cannot, if we would, hide our animal nature; we cannot convert a boy into a disembodied spirit. On every other matter the father tells his son what he can; here he fobs him off; and the son goes to books or to vicious companions; and then the sense of nakedness comes upon him,—sin has entered into his world. No idea is more fantastic or absurd than that sex is a shameful thing. From such notions spring a desire for forbidden fruit, an eagerness of prurient curiosity, a recognition that there is a barrier betwixt the father and his son. Here is the mighty force of sexual attraction awakening in the boy, ready to work for good, ready to work for evil, and the great task of education is to put that power to use for good; but the father stealthily slinks away, and leaves the son to associate that force in his mind with vice and sin, welding this false combination together with all the strength of early thought. Sexual passion is at the base of life; it serves the noblest ends; it manifests itself in poetry and religion; it has made our homes; it has given us our children. Every day we see that passion put to use in labor,

patience, self-denial, and noble discontent. Can we not teach our boys always to link it in their minds with the highest conceptions of nobility, aspiration, and divinity? Is it not blasphemy and idolatry to confound it with grossness and bestiality? We act as if it came from the devil instead of from God; we shun it as a tempter when we should welcome it as a friend. How do we make use of all those aspirations which break, like April blossoms, into flower at the first awakening of passion?

> For indeed I knew
> Of no more subtle master under heaven
> Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
> Not only to keep down the base in man,
> But teach high thought, and amiable words
> And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
> And love of truth, and all that makes a man.

How do we encourage all the youthful readiness for chivalry? What do we do with that longing for a noble quest? The service for fourteen years of Jacob for Rachel is but the type of the service that we should demand of every youth in the first flood of passion. A civilization worthy of the name would exact from him some proof that he understands the sacrament of union. Nor should it be necessary to wait until his love had singled out a

maiden; all the knightliness of boyish manhood should be called to arms at the first trumpet of passion. We let this great seed-time run away in mere enjoyment, unhusbanded. What right has a youth to the great joy of love, until he will put that force into some idealism? We are wont to deem this period a mere animal mating time; we talk lightly of happy youth; whereas it is the great solemn opportunity of life, and the least imperfect evidence of man's communion with some Being high and holy.

Sage heads shake; voices with which we are familiar say: "We are animals just as much as the simplest brutes from which we are descended; and passionate animals cannot be bridled by sentimentality, however maidenly." How pleasant it is to hear the old familiar voices! but we have greater power than they fear. Every course upward begins with an aspiration, a vision of something better; if this is harped upon, insisted on, caught and made permanent, it becomes the creed of a sect; if this sect is faithful and practices its creed, that creed spreads, its tenets become conventions and regulate the conduct of thousands; in the progress of

years conventions strengthen, they are universally accepted, they become laws, govern the actions of generations, and grow into habits; and habits constitute the genius of life. Every great step in civilization has been marked by skepticism, derision, denial, and opposition. When some ancient John Brown rose in his wrath against cannibalism, the hoary-headed anthropophagi wagged their gray beards, laughed, sneered, and brandished their stone tomahawks; when monogamy was advocated, pious polygamists said that civilization was an adjunct of the harem, and predicted ruin and chaos; when the abolitionists denounced slavery, the slave-holders were convinced that they had divine sanction for their cause. We are now told that profligacy is a corporeal necessity, flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, an integral element in our animal nature. Orthodoxy says the world does not stir. *Pur si muove!*

The great labor of creation is still continuing; man is the instrument by which the divine purpose is accomplishing its end. If we will not accept profligacy, that, too, will be sloughed off, and cast away on the rubbish heap of ways and usages that men have left

behind. This elemental fact of life, which in the brutes is mere instinct and in man has uprisen into love, which has given us the hope that love is a revelation to man of the nature of deity, must be looked on as a winged messenger from the gods to lead us on, not as an imp from our brute past to drag us back.

If we are among those who believe that in nature there is nothing holy, we must fill the gap, we must create something holy to believe in, to aspire to. If we are among those who believe in God, a father, then we can hardly reject the long-inherited belief that chastity is a holy estate, which one must not leave except to enter the holy estate of matrimony. This belief may originally have been implanted by fear and superstition, by unreasonable theories of sacrifice and asceticism; but it has justified itself by its merit.

> So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity
> That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
> A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
> Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
> And in clear dream and solemn vision
> Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
> Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
> Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,
> The unpolluted temple of the mind,
> And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence
> Till all be made immortal.

MISS ANNE DOUGLAS SEDGWICK

MISS ANNE DOUGLAS SEDGWICK

I

Miss Sedgwick has written half a dozen novels, and enjoys considerable vogue in England. Her last book, "A Fountain Sealed," known in England as "Valerie Upton," has had a marked success there. A writer in "The Academy" says it "is a true comedy of the soul and one of the most brilliant I have read;" "The Saturday Review," "We have seldom met a novel in which the author's purpose is worked out with so much skill and discrimination;" and "Punch," "The author of 'Valerie Upton' has high literary gifts and a very nice perception of differences in character, both individual and national. I sincerely commend her book to readers who care for the finer kind of work that can well afford to be independent of sensational attraction;" "The Spectator" speaks of her "undeniable charm," her "gracious talent," her "delicate touch."

With this record of praise before us, why have we heard so little of Miss Sedgwick's nov-

els in this country? The English are at least as well able to judge the merit of novels as we are; they have Meredith, Kipling, James, Hardy, Mrs. Humphry Ward, upon whom to form their modern judgments; and when they praise we are generally ready to give a hearing. But in this case we have not listened. Our public likes a glitter of extravagance, a rub-a-dub-dub on some resonant subject, — religion, fashion, or things that are not altogether of good repute; and Miss Sedgwick has made so noiseless an entrance that the public has not turned its head to look. The lesser public, which cares, as "Punch" says, "for the finer kind of work that can well afford to be independent of sensational attraction," has been too much occupied with Mr. James's transatlantic "adventures," his definitive edition of himself, with Mrs. Wharton's exploits, and with belated attempts to make itself familiar with neglected classics. The inattention of the smaller public, at least, can hardly last, now that "A Fountain Sealed" has become talked about.

A new novelist has the disadvantage of not being known; but on the other hand she has

the advantage of a double curiosity, where it can be aroused, both concerning her books and concerning herself. For a man, especially, there is an agreeable tremor of anticipation as he begins a woman's novel. He is like a bachelor ringing the doorbell when on his way to present a letter of introduction to a lady; there is an element of exploration and adventure tinged with romance. In other matters of art it may be that the fact that we are created men and women is immaterial; for other arts concern themselves with other achievements; but the novel aims to substitute its world for the world of fact, and in its world we continue to be male and female. Goethe, in one of his poems, describes how, from his concealment in his window, he watched the swaying of a curtain in a window across the way. The curtain swelled and receded, in obedience to the movings to and fro of some unseen power that glided about the room; and his imagination beat its wings against the barrier in eager speculation concerning the power behind, — beneficent perhaps, beautiful perhaps, and certainly unknown. This is the allegory of a man about to read a woman's novel; but, as our public takes far

greater satisfaction in uncurtained light than in the chiaroscuro of romantic expectancy, I must admit that it is an allegory that fits a comparatively small number of readers.

Women, indeed, have for many years demanded to be judged by the standards applied to men. Passionate protests of Mrs. Browning's echo in one's memory. And now that so many old associations with the word "woman" have been discarded, the justice of the demand has become, in the eyes of those who make it, axiomatic. Truth is truth, we are told, life, life; and the representation of either in art is neither masculine nor feminine. It is safer to decline any challenge to mount into the regions of abstract criticism. There are certain practical reasons in the world as it is to-day that make it impossible for men and women to be on an equality in the art of novel-writing; and, though many women novelists may insist upon measurement by masculine measures, one cannot think that Miss Sedgwick, however severe in her artistic judgments upon herself, would make that demand.

II

Great novels must have a foundation like that of Roman masonry, piers and walls solid and heavy; they must be built from bottom to top of a material fit to resist the stress of fashion, the shiftings of taste, the steady assaults of time; and that material is and always must be experience of life. Of this experience the most important part is familiarity with business, — with money-getting, with the labors, the contrivances, the strifes, the shirks, the grunts, the meanness, the nobility, the greed, the unselfishness, the appetites, the ambitions, the anxieties, that are summed up in that word business. And business is not all: there is the intercourse with the barber, the bootblack, the brakeman, the cabman, the conductor, the cowboy (and so on through the directory), the tobacconist, the undertaker, the manufacturer of pearl buttons, with the neighbor in the train, in the street, in the smoking-room, with the random stranger everywhere. This sum of experience in its intensity, in its amplitude, is denied to a woman; her knowledge must come at second hand from father, brother, husband, cousin,

from books and newspapers. It is this lack that necessarily puts a woman's work with respect to solidity in the second rank. No woman, as our customs stand at present, can attain a first-class education in fiction. What is it, for instance, that gives Madame Marneffe her saliency and permanence but Balzac's ready use of his immense experience of life (an experience acquired in his case as a sponge sucks in water) to create a solid section of Parisian life for her to pirouette upon? Why is Becky Sharp so famous but because Thackeray, with his knowledge of all kinds and classes of men and women, creates a crowd, a bustling, noisy, talking, ostentatious multitude, to walk to and fro behind her and maintain for the time a living scene? What rescues Dickens from the grotesque and from his sentimental mannerism, what supports and upholds Scott's romantic pageantry, but a large and easy control over a rich experience of life?

This handicap put upon a woman is a serious one, and nobody would recognize it more quickly than Miss Sedgwick. Take "A Fountain Sealed," for instance. Its many merits are conspicuous; the presentation of the theme is admirable, the gradual self-revela-

tion of Imogen and Valerie admirable, too; but we are in a sequestered spot, a kind of college quadrangle during the long vacation. We are far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife; and the madding crowd is a most useful repository to draw on in order to create the illusion of actual life.

Possession of a wide mundane experience, of power to whistle at will for a troop of supernumeraries, is by no means necessary to all kinds of fiction; Turgenieff is proof of this. So is Miss Sedgwick's "The Shadow of Life," which is a drama of two souls, where the introduction of supernumeraries would be out of place. But where this power of presenting many people is appropriate, it is invaluable, and, in our present state of society, it is practically confined to men.

In addition to the immense advantage of wide and varied experience, men have what may be called a "bravado" substitute for such experience. They are able to attempt an effect of spaciousness, of the grand manner, by depicting aspects of life which depend for their interest on remoteness from the centres of familiarity. They portray Mohammedans of the Punjab, cowboys of

Wyoming, freebooters of Yucatan, and whatever sonorous subjects they chance to meet in their roaming quests for novelty. There are most delightful stories of anthropophagi, of bigamists, of commandments smashed, of drums and guns and palisadoes. The modern master here is Kipling, that great Barbarian, who raises his splendid protest against the inevitable process of change that is shifting and will shift the centre of interest away from the pictorially triumphant (where he is so individually brilliant, like Roland at Roncesvalles), to the intenser dramas of the bald meetings of "I" and "I" and "I" on the undecorated stage of life.

There is room enough for all kinds of stories,— for the compound of the sahib, the corral of the cowboys, the forecastle of the buccaneers, and for the summer-house of cultivated and idle leisure. There is plenty of room for the novels of women, as well as for those of men. Within the great factory, or perhaps I should say atelier, of fiction, in the storeroom of finished products, barred and locked against the burglaries of time and the sneak-thievery of fashion, such odd companions as the "Three Musketeers," "The

Courting of Dinah Shadd," "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," "Treasure Island," "Daisy Miller," "The Sad Fortunes of the Rev. Amos Barton," and "Cranford" are serenely and permanently placed. The fact that women cannot compete with men everywhere does not make them less formidable rivals within the lists of competition open to them. These are opinions which Miss Sedgwick proclaims by her practice very frankly. Her one gentle attempt to put the key into the forbidden door (a very respectable, domestic suicide), can hardly have commended itself to her better judgment.

Having postulated this recognition of an area of opportunity more restricted than that open to men, one may proceed with the attempt to satisfy that inward appetite for classification which owes no inconsiderable part of its edge to the pleasant egotistical sensations that arise from the fact that classification of others is really a classification of ourselves.

III

Women are excluded from the rough-and-tumble school of the world, from admission to the man's real university, but they do not

lack education of their own. They are shut out from "Scènes de la vie de Paris," but they have their own "scènes de la vie privée." As against the loose and vast confusion of a Balzac's experiences they oppose the trig and compact efficiency of specialization. Take Miss Austen, for example. In a recent number of the "Spectator" I read: "Within the narrow and special limits which Miss Austen set herself she possessed the secret of perfection both in form and substance,—a perfection to which the history of the arts affords no parallel, or affords it in the work of Jan Vermeer of Delft alone." This represents, I believe, the traditional and well-settled opinion both in Great Britain and in this country, concerning Miss Austen's merits. "The narrow and special limits" within which Miss Austen worked do not hinder her art from being "perfect;" in fact, they were the cause of her success. A limited sphere is a help to all but a very few, it is the guardian fence to a flower-bed, the theatre walls that protect the actors from the disheartening amplitude of outer air, the frame that gives a picture its "wholeness." The great frescoes of Balzac, Thackeray, Dickens, Zola, and Tolstoi, flung

on moist walls at passionate speed with their great brushes, are out of mode. The novel-writer is now a specialist; he puts a small canvas on his easel, and selects a small fragment of life for his subject. Of this school a woman, Jane Austen, is the classic mistress in English.

Likewise, women may set off against the geographical freedom of the "bravado" school the practically unlimited areas of the soul, where there are border scenes, savagery, and lawlessness in abundance. The great centres of modern energy must be acknowledged to be, at least, proper seats of fiction. London, New York, Paris, are fit places to call forth the essential as well as the subtler traits of humanity. In the fullest blasts of life men and women are most modernly human, furthest removed from their brutal origins, most interesting in themselves. There the great drama of the sexes can unfold and display itself in the most complex, the most refined, the most exciting, even the most spectacular way. There the human essence as a motive power is at its maximum, the friction of accessories reduced to a minimum, and the movements of life submit to the most

scientific precision; characters act and react upon one another, like billiard balls, with impulsions, contacts, impacts, twists, turns, recoils, so quietly, so certainly, that in comparison the works of "bolder" fiction look like games of croquet.

Within their spheres, women have all the resources of art, philosophy, and passion. Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot, the three great English women in the art of fiction of the nineteenth century, are sufficient proof of this; and they cover the ground so well that, in the case of a new authoress, one naturally essays to put her into one of their divisions. Miss Austen, as the "Spectator" says, stands for an art which, if not supreme, is yet of a very high order; and Miss Sedgwick, who is in purpose a thorough artist, might seem to belong to the Austen school. Membership in a school is determined by talents and aptitudes rather than by the more tangible matriculation of imitation; and her womanliness, her cheerful outlook on life, her high and somewhat cloistered ideals, her interest in light pleasures, her maternal feelings for the happiness of her *dramatis personæ*, her concentration of at-

tention on the romantic elements in the drama of sex, support such a view. But Miss Sedgwick, in a quiet, almost demure manner, and with all the grace of self-sobriety, refuses to accept those protecting limits that secured fame to Miss Austen, she rejects what to many might seem admirably enclosing boundaries for her art, she passes the golden casket in spite of its appeal,—"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;"—and we are constrained to essay the second division, the school of George Eliot.

Doubtless the accepted view which assigns so high a place to Miss Austen as an artist would ascribe to George Eliot a comprehensive, large, understanding knowledge of life, as well as a very remarkable power of embodying that knowledge of life in fiction. George Eliot's immense reputation has felt the ebb of enthusiasm, an ebb which seeks to justify itself by alleging that she had too much at heart the desire to assert a moral principle which should serve in the living of life as the equivalent of a religious sanction, that she was too much of a dogmatic philosopher concerning any matter that resists dogmatic philosophy so obstinately as life

does. Her art is certainly very great, as great as Miss Austen's in its potentiality, but less effective in act because of her breadth and of her large ambitions.

It is before this casket, — "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves," — that one loiters in the hope of pigeonholing Miss Sedgwick. She is certainly ambitious; she has rejected the guardian limits of a narrow art, she wishes to express more than a genre picture, more than a romantic situation, she wishes to express some truth concerning life, some permanent principle of human conduct, give some touch of the human essence. This ambition appears most sharply in that interesting and original novel, "The Shadow of Life." But neither this bond of discipleship, of sympathy rather, nor their common satisfaction in moral emphasis, puts our author into George Eliot's school. She, as well as George Eliot's critics, believes that novelists who are ambitious to tell some truth about life should turn towards drama, towards Shakespeare; that the tending towards a philosophic formula, towards an explanation of life in anything but the terms of life, must, at least as a mode of fiction, be in the wrong

direction. She declines the category, and we pass to the third division, the school that desires to delineate passion.

Charlotte Brontë, or rather the Brontë family, certainly exemplifies that aspiration. Delineations of passion, even by Lear and Othello in their torments, show how poor an instrument is language to express the tumultuous confusion of the organs of life when in the throes of anguish; and if we put Jane Eyre or Cathy beside the raving of Lear or Othello, the difficulty of simulating passion becomes still more obvious. — "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath." — Yet life in its intensity is the supreme goal of the art of fiction, and as one watches Charlotte Brontë, her eyes fixed, her breath coming hard, hurl herself at the task, one feels a thrill of admiration for her courage. Beside that desperate charge the dainty progress of Miss Austen's guarded and protected art seems a very mincing affair. Miss Sedgwick recognizes this goal; in fact, "The Shadow of Life" is rather a delineation of passion than the search for a philosophy. That delineation may be a little monotonous, but the very concentration of attention on the

long-held vibrant note stirs one like a passionate song of love and fate, of passion predominant over fate. But Miss Sedgwick's self-sobriety comes to her aid; she accepts passion as the supreme revelation of life; but its very supremacy, its very remoteness from the ordinary week-days, makes it but a portion of life.

There is place for passion, there is room for philosophy, there is need of Miss Austen's art; and Miss Sedgwick is eclectic, she is not a disciple in any sense except that in which we are all disciples of those who have gone before. She evades the importunities of our lazy convenience, and we are forced to judge her as an individual, according to a standard based upon general principles.

IV

Our failure to put Miss Sedgwick into one of the divisions, suggested by the three great English women to whom I have referred, does not on the one hand imply colorlessness on her part; nor on the other hand an absence of elements with which an individual, in the assertion of his own tastes, might, not unreasonably, find fault. One may admit the failure of

classification, and yet strike a balance. On the credit side all would agree to put those qualities that suggested the unsuccessful classifications: an artistic skill that seems to have resonant achievements within reach if it will but accept guardian limits; a philosophical insight into life; and sober good sense which recognizes that the delineation of passion, although the supreme test of fiction, is not the routine occupation for a novelist. On the same side go her mastery of composition, displayed in "A Fountain Sealed;" her command of dialogue, clear, clever, copious, varied, and witty, as, for instance, in "The Confounding of Camelia;" as well as her almost ubiquitous skill in dramatic effects, which in naturalness and vividness affect one, as Macaulay would have said, like the lost comedies of Menander.

On the debit side — if one is to insist, as is a reader's doubtful privilege, on personal taste — there are three principal entries to be made. The power of a novel to create the illusion of life reproduced depends on what in painting Mr. Berenson calls the tactile values, upon the rendering of the third dimension, upon the number of figures introduced that

present themselves to our imagination as solid, as figures which one can walk round and regard from all sides. Miss Sedgwick of course aims at solidity, at thickness, at this necessary third dimension; and yet one involuntarily recalls the days when she practiced the painter's art, which in regard to the third dimension is a matter of technique, of light and shade, of varying values, of converging lines, and the other makeshifts of perspective. Certainly at times there is an assuring sense of solidity. The heroines are almost always modeled with a dainty realism; but some figures are left in high relief, some in low relief, and others still hardly emergent from a flat background. The heroes, though they quit the kind, protecting background, — Peter Odd, Perior, Geoffrey Daunt, Sir Basil, — shrink modestly from any vigorous assertion of reality; they behave like English boys at a party. With regard to some of the minor figures, we vaguely suspect that their personalities are a mere pictorial contrivance. But heroes and minor characters are of very slight consequence; the charming, satisfactory, romantic heroine lightly carries in Atlantean fashion, on her slim, strong back, the story and all its personages.

There is, also, if one wishes to make a second deduction from a fault-seeking personal equation, a limitation in the range of Miss Sedgwick's characters. One certainly sees a family likeness among the heroines, and among some of the secondary persons. I would not go so far as to suggest that Miss Sedgwick, still reminiscent of the days when she was a painter prior to becoming a novelist, keeps her old habit of painting several portraits from the same model, merely changing the pose and the dress. That would be an exaggeration, and unfair. Rather her *dramatis personæ* are a stock company, and each one plays several parts.

Her *prima donna* is a capital actress, who plays the gay, attractive, scheming girl, like Kate Archinard; the brilliant, flirtatious, ambitious, untruthful, and self-abnegating Camelia; the noble, high-spirited, lovable Eppie,—a type, in her heroism, charm, and constancy, of desirable womanhood;—and the self-complacent, self-deceiving, serene egotist, Imogen. She also plays Claire in "The Rescue" and Lady Angela in the "Paths of Judgement." The second lady plays the gentle, innocent, candid, virtuous, unselfish

young woman; for instance, the title rôle in "Dull Miss Archinard," Mary in "The Confounding of Camelia," Valerie Upton in "A Fountain Sealed," Madame Vicaud in "The Rescue," and such parts. The leading gentleman plays the brave, strong, disciplined, noble, self-sacrificing man, — Geoffrey Daunt, Perior, Eustace Damier, and Jack Pennington. The second actor plays the "foolish father" part, — Mr. Archinard, Mr. Merrick, the late Mr. Upton, and Captain Palairet. They all act very well, they play Miss Sedgwick's plots with tact, grace, and skill, probably very much better than another stock company would, and they display vigor and versatility. The point I make — and in doing so I have exaggerated as the devil's advocate will — is that there is a definite type underlying each group of Miss Sedgwick's characters, and that in reading each new book one remembers how the actor played the corresponding part in the other books.

Take, for example, "A Fountain Sealed." Imogen, the heroine, is the embodiment of a type which is both human and familiar. Few of us, if any, however, know the type in such flawless consistency, though we all meet as-

pects of it in others and in ourselves. To my mind Miss Sedgwick has insisted too much upon what is typical, upon the idea, unembarrassed by the variegated dusts of the earth, which in life blur the purity of the idea and confound the outline of the type. The danger of what is called realism lies in wandering far from the typical in the hope of getting close to the individual; and an excited novelist is likely to find himself, in the very middle of the game, at a perilous distance from the hunk; for the type, vulgarly speaking, is the hunk, the one place of safety. Miss Sedgwick understands this so well that she runs into the opposite danger, and stays too close to the typical. The more she studies a type, the more interesting it becomes to her, the more competent she feels to describe it, until at last, consciously or not, she repeats her characters. This is by no means a defect in any single book, but it is a defect in Miss Sedgwick's work as a whole, and an indication of limited experience, or limited power, or perhaps merely of an, as yet, limited ambition.

The third item on the debit side remains to be noted. In attempting to put Miss Sedgwick into one of those three schools, it was easy

to forget their remote dates, let us roughly say 1812, 1845, 1860. Time has not been standing still since then; many familiar manifestations of life have altered, — clothes, furniture, domestic architecture, poetry, religion. Psychology has grown from infancy to youth, if not to manhood; and, in the same time (though we may assume that human nature and art are approximately constant) the attention of fiction has shifted. Hence have arisen what are known in the slang of to-day as realism, symbolism, psychological fiction. The matter of consequence is the shifting of attention; and the art of fiction must adapt itself to the change. Miss Sedgwick has grown up with this change, and cannot project herself backward into past generations. Her barque feels the powerful current of this newer fiction, the course of which is most familiarly marked by that prosperous and fast-increasing flotilla of new-rigged ships that show their modern spars and sails so bright and glittering (for Mr. Henry James, of course, is an exponent, not the cause, of the current). That mariner puts up all the masts, yards, and spars that his hulls will bear, flies his jibs, his spankers, his royal and sky-

scraping sails, to take advantage of all the puffs and flaws of to-day's weather. Miss Sedgwick, as well as others, when putting to sea, would be unwise not to profit by his dexterity, his experience, his boldness, his immense Yankee ingenuity (a certain Down-East shrewdness is one of his main characteristics) in adapting his rigging to the lighter winds.

But grant as we must the importance of to-day's weather, of getting such wind as may be blowing, in order to make progress towards that haven where Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronté, and George Eliot are securely at anchor, and grant that Mr. James's great service to the art of fiction is his insistence on the importance of fitting himself to his immediate circumstances so closely that he may become their representative and expositor, does it follow because his course shows the current of modern life that his rigging is the best? For the cut of the sails, after all, comes down to a matter of prose. The great struggle (it appears to be a great struggle) to fit words to transitory, tremulous, evanescent thoughts is an affair of prose. This is the awkward predicament that

faces the whole guild of novelists. Prose is a material, an opportunity, or a nuisance, as you please, but there it is; there is no choice between prose and silence. The question before the "cates and summerhouse" novelist is, shall he (or she) adopt the cut of Mr. James's jib?

The fact that the great English novelists, such as Thackeray or Fielding, have been masters of a smooth, perspicuous, even style; that De Quincey depicted the cruelest of passions, and that Newman defined the Catholic conception of grace, in language famous for clarity and power; that Hume, Locke, and Martineau are, given their subjects, also smooth and perspicuous; that Professor William James is a master of intelligibility; does not contradict or answer the assertion that fiction in its present condition, striving as it does to depict the subtler emotions of the human spirit, needs language more elastic, more flexible, of finer texture, to serve its purposes, than the fiction of Sir Walter Scott's day, for instance. One has but to glance at the outside of a psychological dictionary to see what a voluminous technical terminology is necessary for those who depict the soul in terms

of science. Those who depict the soul in terms of art must have the utmost freedom of means. Language must be supple, intricate, complex, elaborate, and delicate, so that a single sentence may be modified until it is able to express in a not inadequate manner a momentary aspect of the soul. All this is true enough; yet we still face the doubt whether Mr. James has invented the best phraseology for this purpose. Is his the language that we shall all learn to speak as we emerge into the upper air of the future? With this doubt in one's mind, one cannot but regret that Miss Sedgwick, in "A Fountain Sealed," betrays some tendency towards an answer in the affirmative.

The enumeration of entries on the debit side, especially when they have to be hunted up, is a Scrooge-like performance; and even when all is done it remains impossible to strike a balance. One's mind at the end is certainly not left looking at the petty entries on the debit side, but at those numerous entries across the dividing line, the poetry of Valerie Upton, the characters of Imogen, Eppie, and Camelia, the smoothness and technical skill of "A Fountain Sealed," and the

fusion of philosophy and passion in "The Shadow of Life." Nevertheless, although we are balked of a classification and of a balance struck, we may by the aid of these unsuccessful attempts arrive at some conclusion, which can be packed into the humbler dimensions of a formula. But we must begin the attempt from another quarter.

V

We assume two things. First: a woman, from the fact that she differs from a man in body, mind, and education, is essentially different in her creative powers, and therefore, if she really creates, her creature, the novel, will be infused with a feminine spirit. Second: many of the qualities that have enabled men to write good novels are not essentially masculine; they have become associated in our minds with men during the long course of history, but through education and opportunity they may come equally within the reach of women. For instance, in a man we desire intelligence, judgment, imagination, insight, dramatic power, and constructive skill; these qualities are as appropriate to women as to men. Our task therefore is to

find some formula that will reconcile these masculine qualities with a pervading feminine spirit. Such a formula must be definite enough to have intrinsic value, and yet elastic enough to suit individual taste.

There is a saying of La Bruyère's, made with reference to social life, which is in substance the very formula to indicate the desirable qualities in a woman's novels; for fiction establishes a sort of social relation between the writer and the reader, and surely one of the chief pleasures in a good book lies in enjoyment of the author's personality. This saying is: "Une belle femme qui a les qualités d'un honnête homme est ce qu'il y a au monde d'un commerce plus délicieux." In order to get at La Bruyère's real meaning we must go behind the ordinary translation of *honnête homme*, and accept Sainte-Beuve's explanation—"l'homme du monde accompli, l'*honnête homme*, comme on s'exprimait autrefois." And so I render the saying, "*Une belle femme* with the traits of an accomplished man of the world is the most delightful companionship in the world." Such a woman is what Goethe would have wished to discover behind the curtain in the window

over the way; and such a definition furnishes us with an hypothesis of what a woman's novel ought to be. There are doubtless hundreds of other hypotheses upon this subject that satisfy the people who use them, but for persons in our particular predicament, — who seek the feminine spirit expressing itself by means of masculine tools, — La Bruyère is a friend in need.

A measure is a very comfortable thing to possess, and yet, as one stretches out a hand towards "A Fountain Sealed," one begins to be sensible of the unusual exigency of the proposed standard. A novel accepted in New York, published in a successful magazine, reviewed by the newspapers, sold in respectable numbers (by respectable here I mean large), must of necessity be adapted to such other working hypotheses of what constitutes merit in a woman's novel, that ours seems a matter of academic remoteness, of opportunity for cavil, of ostentatious withdrawal from those ample spaces in which the reading public congregates, and of retirement into some little alley (decent no doubt, but a mere *cul de sac*), where nobody goes because it leads nowhere — or at most to the privacy

of enclosed places to which the people who do not live there have no desire to go. All measures that denote any privacy of taste must be open to objections, and yet a reader is constrained to choose between an omnibus measure, a flabby flexibility that adapts itself to anything, or some less hospitable standard that makes most achievement seem extremely raw and insignificant. Let me try to justify this measure by applying it to Miss Sedgwick.

La Bruyère's dogma, like all others that embody a truth, need not be restricted to a literal simplicity of exactness, for the letter, here as elsewhere, killeth. The phrase in its application to literature is entitled to a reasonable construction. The traits of an accomplished man of the world are good sense, good taste, intelligence, and moderation, and separate themselves sharply from other qualities not undesirable, — from enthusiasm, from passion, from audacity, from the fervor and fluency of the *improvisatore*. These excluded qualities mark another type, which both deserves and has its spokeswomen. The fire of imagination, the impulsiveness of idealism, the hunger of the emotions, are traits that we

are accustomed to picture to ourselves under the term "genius;" they call to mind "Jane Eyre" or "Corinne." Passion will be heard, and will always have its votaries; and to anybody who can give it adequate expression we may concede the possession of "genius." But *les qualités d'un honnête homme* are of a different order, they have a different task to accomplish; and they need fear no disparagement from a comparison, because (at least according to Sainte-Beuve) it is an axiom in art that "good sense and genius are members of the same family."

Good sense forbids improbable events, inconsistencies, prolixity, smartness, irrelevance, and affectation; it prevents all the characters from being wits or geniuses. It attends to the smallest matters as well as to the greatest. Even eminent novelists sometimes suffer from the lack of it; Ouida, for instance, had a scanty supply. It is essential to excellence in the art of composition, for that is merely the application of trained and educated good sense to the framework and details of a novel. It is inferior to genius,—for genius is the best sense, the power of flooding light on what to common minds is blank and ob-

scure, — but it can oppose genius to advantage when genius is on its high horse, and it always opposes extravagance, eccentricity, and the illusions that mistake themselves for genius.

This eulogy upon good sense is really a eulogy upon Miss Sedgwick's craft as shown in its last and most finished product, "A Fountain Sealed." Take one point in the book, the plot. It is marked by good sense throughout. It is a firm, stable, reasonable plot. It needs no ingenuity, no afterthought, no *deus ex machina* to come to its rescue. It moves onward with a serene, steady, orderly progress. The reign of law, of wise law, is apparent.

There are people who, in the matter of plots, do not like law; people born with glorious visions of vagabondage, enthusiastic anarchists; no law, a vast, unhampered liberty for them. Their ideal of a story-teller is the wind that bloweth where it listeth. Anarchy, they say, if not genius, is always suggestive of genius. This "chartered libertine" theory is a very good theory, perhaps the best; but it goes far and is too likely to take the reader a tramp into a second volume, or even worse.

Novels that are *feræ naturæ* may be very admirable, strong, muscular, untamed, burning bright like tigers; but readers are not *feræ naturæ* (not commonly), they are tamed, trained, used to artificiality and convention, and when they ask that novels share the discipline that has been meted to them, the request seems reasonable. A tamed, domesticated novel is more satisfactory. Only the great masters can let their personages play the "chartered libertine;" with other novelists free will leads to unseemliness, disorder and riot. In "A Fountain Sealed" we are not a whit hampered, we are merely made comfortable by a sense of propriety, knowledge, and law.

Another indication of good sense is the economy of visible effort. The plot is singularly simple, and yet produces a rich effect. There are four principal persons, mother and daughter and their respective lovers; and the plot is based on differences of character which cause involuntary inconstancy in the lovers and compel them to exchange the objects of their respective affections. The relations of these four are so skillfully disposed that they give the snap of the theatre, the

dramatic vigor and emphasis that lift a novel at once out of those shoals of ineffectiveness into which even a good novel that lacks the dramatic element drags its readers. That so deliberate a novel should produce the impression which is commonly found only in the drama (with its command of rapidity, unexpectedness, brevity) is a memorable success.

The more one considers the book, the more the qualities of *un honnête homme* stick out. There is a kind of masculine coolness about it, an evenness of pace, an attitude that would be intrepid, if the action of the story called for intrepidity. Many women, in the presence of the climax, of the dénouement in their stories, or of some scene of intenser significance, are a little flustered, they become excited and nervous, they lose control of their critical faculties and let the situation escape; they are so anxious not to hamper the "individuality," the "natural ease," and fleetness of the story, that they let it loose to rush and tumble toward its goal. But Miss Sedgwick has the reins always taut, she is a capital whip, holds her scenes well in hand and drives them where she wishes. There is an easy level-headedness

about it all that might irritate persons of Brontesque sympathies who crave the *ivresse légère* of the emotional rush, the pell-mell, the *élan* of a runaway that takes the bit in its mouth and careers to glorious ruin. One cannot have the advantage of both temperaments, one cannot enjoy the pleasures of fury and sobriety at the same moment; those who like things hot must not go where they have them cold, and in the case of "A Fountain Sealed" they have come, so to speak, to the wrong counter.

Another trait akin to masculine good sense is Miss Sedgwick's clear, one might almost say serene, insight, which sees how tragedy and comedy depend for their differences from one another upon very slight shifts in the aspect of things. They share an interchangeable mask; tilt it one way and it is comedy, tilt it the other and it is tragedy. Such insight, when it finds adequate expression, as in Cervantes, is one of the elemental forces in literature. In "A Fountain Sealed" the dramatic situation might serve for a Greek tragedy; it has probably served for dozens of farces. Miss Sedgwick has laid the emphasis on the tragic side more, very much more,

than on the comic; this is because, with all her *qualités d'un honnête homme*, she is a woman, and to women tragedy is far more deeply sympathetic than comedy.

VI

I have left the emphasis too long upon the latter division of the phrase quoted; I must refer to its central idea. One may, on general principles, expect men to write better novels than women. But a woman, as I have said, has this prerogative: she is a woman. My formula treats that as a tremendous advantage; and if indeed a woman's society is so very delightful in life, why should it not retain at least some of its prestige in a novel? This advantage should not be lost; a woman's novel should reveal the sex of its creator. Certain alloys — masculine qualities — must be added to harden, to restrain, to check; to give steady horizontal lines to the too aspiring leap into the air of feminine tendencies; but within, at the centre, must be found the spirit of woman. If a book has really emanated from a woman's heart, if it is really the child of her own feelings, intuitions, and perceptions, of her own experience of life, and is

not a mere artificial construction made out of other people's experiences and imaginings, this will be so. It is so in the case before us.

Miss Sedgwick obeys the central principle of all creative art; she brings her innermost feelings and experiences to bear upon her work; she has enabled the indefinite essence of feminine personality to transpire; and she has done more. In Valerie Upton, for instance, she has given that essence objective expression. This charming character is a woman's woman, eminently a feminine creation. A man's heroine when presented to us sympathetically produces sentiments which, though they may be in a highly rarified, thin, and volatile state, if condensed and solidified become the romantic love of a man for a woman; whereas a woman's heroine inspires feelings that at most crystallize into friendship and allied emotions, admiration, esteem, respect. The great romantic heroines, Desdemona, Rosalind, Beatrix Esmond, Ethel Newcome, Diana Vernon, Clara Middleton, Werther's Charlotte, Eugénie Grandet, the heroines of Turgenieff's novels, are all men's heroines; they suggest the excitement, the charm, the interest of the not impossible she. But Jane

Eyre, Dorothea of "Middlemarch," Gwendolyn Harleth, or Corinne certainly call forth nothing more troubling than friendship.

Valerie Upton has the power of stirring forgotten memories. She fits herself into one's past, and gives a body and a name to that vague, half-real, half-imagined comforter that came into the dreamland of one's youth. In her company the boy, freed from the spirit of the household, unvexed by the genius of family, wandered into a pleasant, unfenced, unpathed spaciousness where his individuality found a liberal reception, where his tastes and whims each received separate and personal welcome. There he met tolerance, sympathy, and a set of appreciations and values new and intoxicating. She was the compassionate goddess of solitude, of melancholy, of those vague affections which during adolescence grow into religion or love, and spend themselves in moody wanderings through fields and woods, in bad verses, in indignant outbursts at the commonness, the vulgarity of life. And now that creature of imagination, who faded away in the light of common day, and seemed lost forever, reappears as a heroine in a novel, and the tremors of youth vibrate once more.

This effect is indeed sentimental, — but is there not something sentimental for a man in all attractive feminine society, whether in novels or out of them?

In "The Shadow of Life," still more than in "A Fountain Sealed," one discovers the full measure of appropriateness that there is in La Bruyère's words, *une belle femme*, as applied to the spirit that pervades Miss Sedgwick's novels. One need not enter into the disputed question whether beauty is the proper purpose for a novelist; one may simply assume that all those readers who care to have a womanly spirit pervade a novel would wish the spirit of beauty as well. This is no slight demand; but "The Shadow of Life" fulfills it to an unusual degree. The story of Eppie as a little girl, and as a woman in love, is full of a feminine spirit, and has marked elements of beauty, too. It leads one on to still greater demands.

Since the publication of "The Dull Miss Archinard," Miss Sedgwick's steps forward, though somewhat irregular, have been veritable strides. In "The Confounding of Camelia" there is far greater self-confidence, in "The Shadow of Life" far more expression

of the spirit of beauty, in "A Fountain Sealed" far higher skill in composition and in the delineation of character. The period in which a novelist should keep her attention steadily fixed on craftsmanship is past, she has learned her profession; she has essayed with success the hard tasks of delineating sentiment and character; she has shown that she possesses a steadiness and a perseverance that will enable her to make the most of her talents; she has the rare gift of self-sobriety; and she has two special advantages, a high standard and the knowledge that she could not command, even if she should wish, the dangerous prize of immediate popularity.

May one not look forward hopefully to a long series of novels which will bring to one's mind still more convincingly the truth of La Bruyère's phrase: "Une belle femme qui a les qualités d'un honnête homme est ce qu'il y a au monde d'un commerce plus délicieux"?

NATIONS AND THE DECALOGUE

NATIONS AND THE DECALOGUE

I

THE difference between the current doctrines concerning the conduct of men and those concerning the conduct of nations is an old topic of debate; but now and then our minds are startled by the contrast, as by the stroke of an unexpected hour, and we bound to our feet, determined to set the matter in our minds in a state of permanent equilibrium. Such bells have been striking frequently during the last year,[1] owing to the difficult questions before the United States and before Great Britain. Simple propositions concerning the objects and aims of a nation have been expressed in simple language. These propositions owe their interest for us to the nature of the objects and aims advocated, and not to the particular circumstances which caused the advocates to speak. Colonel Denby, one of our commissioners to the Philippines, has said:

[1] Originally published May, 1900, during President McKinley's first administration. The references to current events have been left unchanged.

"Commerce, not politics, is king. I learned what I know of diplomacy in a severe school. I found among my colleagues not the least hesitation in proposing to their respective governments to do anything which was supposed to be conducive to their interests. *There can be no other rule for the government of all persons who are charged with the conduct of affairs than the promotion of the welfare of their respective countries.* The cold, hard, practical question alone remains: Will the possession of these islands benefit us as a nation?" Mr. Edward Dicey, C. B., writing in the "Nineteenth Century" of Mr. Gladstone's conduct after the battle of Majuba Hill, said: "I am willing to grant that Mr. Gladstone seriously believed that for England to make peace without an attempt to reëstablish her impaired prestige was an act so magnanimous as to be certain to secure the admiration of mankind, to bring about a union of hearts between Boers and British, and to inaugurate an era of good will and peace, not only in the annals of South Africa, but of the British Empire. The conception, I fully admit, was grand, but a *failure is a failure, no matter what may have been the nobility of*

the motives by which its authors were inspired." Senator Beveridge opened the debate upon the Philippine question in the Senate by argument that the matter was a commercial speculation, that a very large profit was absolutely certain, and that the rulers of a nation had nothing more to consider. "*The Philippines are so valuable in themselves that we should hold them.*"

The interest in these passages lies in the fundamental doctrine that a state is an exceedingly simple society, with no concerns except those of its belly; and in the corollary, that its government ought to give free rein to an appetite which in a private citizen ought to be checked and controlled. By a logical necessity, the statecraft of stuffing the belly carries its own pack of means on its back, for as surely as we think only of the belly we shall do those things that creatures do who have only the belly to think of. Poor Richard says, "He who thinks that money is everything will do everything to get money." It is a law of life that means match ends: fair means to fair ends, foul means to foul ends.

The conception of statecraft shown in our quotations is no new doctrine. Four hundred

years ago Machiavelli held similar notions, and he spoke with a frankness equal to that of Senator Beveridge; but he differs in his expositions, for he spends little space upon the ends of statecraft, taking them for granted, and discourses chiefly upon the means to those ends. He says: "How worthy it is in a ruler to keep faith, to practice fair dealing, and not cunning, everybody agrees. Nevertheless, experience in these days teaches us that those rulers have done great things who have made little account of keeping faith, who have had cunning to bewilder men's minds, and that in the end they have overcome those who have based their conduct on honest dealing. . . . A prudent ruler cannot, nor ought he, to keep faith, when such fidelity shall turn against him, and the reasons which moved him to make his promises are spent. . . . And a ruler will never lack pretexts to color his breach of faith. Of this I could give numberless examples in our own times, and show how many treaties, how many promises, have been made naught by the faithlessness of rulers; and he who best has played the fox has prospered best. But it is necessary to know well how to conceal this nature, and to be a great

deceiver and hypocrite; for men are so simple, and yield so readily to the wants of the moment, that he who will trick shall always find another who will suffer himself to be tricked. . . . We must recognize this, that a ruler, and especially a new ruler . . . cannot observe all those things which men deem good; being often obliged, for the welfare of the state, to act contrary to humanity, contrary to charity, contrary to religion. And besides, he must have a mind ready to shift as the winds and eddies of fortune bid; not to depart from good, if he can help himself, but to know how to do evil, if he must. Therefore a ruler must take great care that no word shall slip from his mouth that shall not be full of piety, trust, humanity, religion, and simple faith, and he must appear, to eye and ear, all compact of these. . . . *Let a ruler, then, make the state prosper, and his methods always will be judged honorable and be praised by all;* because the vulgar are always caught by appearance and by the event; and in this world there are none but the vulgar. A certain ruler of to-day — it is well not to name names — proclaims nothing but peace and faith; had he observed either,

he would have toppled the state and his own reputation."[1]

This passage displays a courage and a plain-speaking equal to the theme. Such frankness in Machiavelli, however, deserves less praise than similar frankness in Colonel Denby or Senator Beveridge, because our English-speaking world has always attached greater value to appearance than does the Latin world; thinking that if our children see a vast simulacrum of patriotic honor, piety, and propriety looming huge on the horizon, they will believe it real, until they too are old enough and have worldly wisdom enough to be let into the secret, and to hand the show as a rich legacy, uninjured, to their children. "Respect the Outside" is an English educational doctrine. All ranks stand firm, protesting the reality of the simulacrum; for if somebody should come along and give the painted Colossus a tiny push, what might not happen? When Don Quixote had made himself a helmet out of pasteboard and glue, in order to make proof of it he set it on a block, and, swinging his sword, dealt it a mighty stroke. It took him some time to put the

[1] *The Prince*, chap. xviii.

pieces together, and he deemed it wise not to put the helmet to the test again. So our Anglo-Saxon public, with its quick, practical instinct, act on the rule, in international affairs, not to lay a finger on the national simulacrum of faith, honor, and religion, for fear it might tumble over. It is always possible that this noble effigy, like the Trojan horse, may be accepted by other nations as a thank-offering from us to the gods.

Instead of consideration, analysis, and examination of policy; instead of discussing the advantages or disadvantages of national gluttony, patriotic orators praise the piety and magnanimity and devotion with which Great Britain and the United States do their several tasks of civilizing Indians, Irish, Dervishes, Philippines, Boers, or whoever it may be; saying to themselves, Let nobody suspect that there are low animal processes in our national life. Up to now oratory has been fit for kindergartens and little boys. Therefore all the greater praise is due to men of a new way of thinking, who have adopted some part of that Latin plainness of speech which is so conspicuous in Machiavelli; who publicly declare, not that a government must act

with honor, faith, humanity, and religion, but that it must be resolute to procure the aggrandizement of the state.

II

This plainness of speech is a great gain; we owe much to the men who have dared to speak out. For the English notion of the worth of appearances, however valuable it may be as a means of education for the young, however valuable for its qualities of scenery and background for a picture of a president or premier and his cabinet, however valuable as a point of vantage from which to throw stones at the Latins, is full of danger. A statesman cannot proceed safely with a major premiss which assumes that all that glitters is gold. Prop appearance as one may, the ways in which it will serve as substitute for reality are few. A national policy is a whole composed of ends, and of means to those ends. How are we to discuss a national policy, if our rulers proclaim that the nation seeks honor, faith, religion, and all those qualities which Machiavelli tells them a government should pretend to seek? Nobody can oppose such ends, debate is confined to means;

and, so long as the ends are hidden by words, discussion as to whether the means adopted by the government — war, tariff, monopolies, nepotism, or whatever they may be — are the wisest means or no is mere blindman's buff. But when we are told that the government has no proper aim other than the commercial welfare of the country, that noble aims which do not result in commercial welfare are to be blamed, that the sole interest of a nation lies in its belly, then we have a subject to discuss which may justify a certain difference of opinion; and gratitude is due to those plain-speaking men who have put the question so clearly before us.

These statesmen have a perfect right to adopt Machiavelli's reasoning and invoke his authority, because the situation at the beginning of the twentieth century is not so different from that in the time of Machiavelli. In Florence and in Italy there were dangers similar to those which affect the minds of statesmen to-day. Now we stand in fear of Asiatic hordes, or shudder with the premonitory thrills of a life-and-death grapple between the English and the Slav races; then there were Tedeschi, Francesi, and Spagnuoli,

who overran the peninsula. Now Europe is struggling for trade with the East; then the seaboard cities of Italy and France, the towns of Flanders, of the Netherlands, of Portugal, and of Spain compelled their governments to fight for the Eastern trade and its forty per cent dividends. In the sixteenth century the individual was as eager to make a fortune at little cost as he is to-day. Then, too, the Italians felt, very much as we feel to-day, that they were "of earth's first blood," and bore on their shoulders the burden of civilization. Machiavelli spurred on his countrymen with Petrarch's verses: —

Chè l' antico valore
Negli Italici cuor' non è ancor morto.

Machiavelli lived contemporary with Cæsar Borgia and Bembo, cardinals; Julius della Rovere, pope; Benvenuto Cellini, artist; Aretino, man of letters; and in a society not very different from that drawn by Boccaccio. As he believed that individuals have no moral standards, he naturally believed that a government should have no other aim than the aggrandizement of the state, and that the rules of right have nothing to do with statecraft. In the last half-century, Manning and New-

man, cardinals, Leo XIII, pope, John Ruskin in art, Tennyson and Lowell in letters, Abraham Lincoln and Gladstone, statesmen, show the change of our manners and the growth of our ethical standards. Mr. Chamberlain, though he is as zealous for the spread of civilization as Torquemada was for the spread of true religion, recognizes the changed customs of the time. President McKinley, though he is as resolute for the enlargement of the United States as Louis XI for that of France, recognizes the changes in statecraft. Nevertheless, the clash of national interests is very much like what it was centuries ago. We change the fashion of the stomacher, but the old appetites remain. And if, as Senator Beveridge would say, the old appetites remain unchanged, why change the processes of feeding?

On the other hand, it may be suggested that the continuance of the same processes of feeding has perpetuated the old appetites; that on the whole the success of Europe as a commonwealth of nations has not been so conspicuous as to warrant a hasty judgment that good fruit has grown from these methods. In Italy, for example, Machiavelli's rules were

obeyed, and three hundred years of degradation followed. Relief came to Italy from the sympathy of England, the romance of France, the self-sacrifice of her own sons; no Borgia, no Medici, saved her, but the preachings of Mazzini, the deeds of Garibaldi. If doctrines in conformity to an ethical standard serve the interest of a single state, why not try them as rules of statecraft in international relations?

It does not seem unreasonable for a state to try an ethical standard. Presidents and premiers have admitted that such a standard among individuals has been of great service to humanity; that it has enabled races to prevail over others in which individuals followed only the rules of selfishness. After myriad experiments of other methods, men have gradually learned to believe in the wisdom of obedience to a moral code. In particular cases, as Machiavelli noted, disobedience to this code achieves success, but in the long run it brings failure. Statesmen, as well as common men, must not be guided by the exceptions; if they cannot prove the principle for themselves, they must accept it on trust. They must have faith.

Faith is belief in the nobler experience of life. So necessary is that belief to the human race that in all the assaults of expediency there have been men to guard it, packing it as a sacred thing into little sentences. The questionings of selfish men, the curiosity of subtle minds, the skepticism of the advocates of novelty, have only served to grind and polish the great teaching of experience into language which babies can understand; and none reject it except those who have set up in its place what they please to call "knowledge of the world." The real experience of humanity is that right, justice, and high endeavor should guide the conduct of men. The reward of virtue is not always bread, nor of magnanimity to be the cynosure of envious eyes; none the less, we teach our children the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, and in private life we strive to obey them.

Why are statesmen so fearful of the great experience of humanity; why do they dread an ethical standard; why are they men of such little faith? Why do they, at all times, in all places, shake their heads, and say, "Oh, the intricacy, oh, the difficulties, oh, the clashing

and smashing of a million interests!" We all recognize the intricacy and the difficulty surrounding the course of nations. Not from the simplicity of the task of guiding a nation do we wonder at the disregard of those rules of right conduct which govern private men, but because of its manifold dangers and of its infinite perplexities. No man is endowed with sight to see far into the future, no man can foretell the forces which will prevail a generation hence; no ship of state can steer its course by the foam of the surrounding waves. The threads of life are so many and so complicated, the forces of life so myriad, the influences of individual men so uncertain, that no man's experience will serve him for a compass. There is but one course for a statesman to pursue. He must consult the deepest and truest experience of humanity, ponder over it till he feels conviction, and then act in obedience to that conviction continually. The deepest and truest experience of mankind is embodied in its moral laws; and even in tender care of a nation's belly, rulers are not wise to disregard them.

If the Ten Commandments bind a man, and prescribe what he shall do and what he shall

not do, do they bind two men, and three? And, if two and three, then do they bind a hundred, and a hundred thousand, and a hundred million? If they bind John P. Robinson, private citizen, do they cease to bind him when he takes oath as selectman, as mayor, governor, member of Parliament, premier, or president? The distinction is worthy of Thomas Aquinas or Tartuffe. Nothing is more striking, as evidence of the nature of the human mind, than the difference made by crossing the threshold of the Department of State or of the House of Commons. Conscience, dominant before, now stays flunkey-like outside, while the new public servants mutter phrases about "practical matters," "affairs of the nation," "economic development," "destiny;" or look melancholy, like men at the funeral eulogy of a bad man. "Nihil de Re Publica nisi bonum." What is there about the oath of office, crossing the congressional threshold, hanging of coats on the Commons' pegs, that makes a grand climacteric in a virtuous man's life, and turns his moral ideas topsy-turvy and induces him to talk sin and folly? Can he no longer hear the great voices whispering out of the past

that by justice shall a nation flourish, and by injustice shall she grow faint? Every great national wrong-doing weakens the bonds of duty between her private citizens; it enfeebles civic virtues; it encourages license and self-indulgence; it induces the rich to oppression, and the poor to crime; it is like a great shock that wrenches every nail in the ship, and by a thousand little weakenings deprives her of the robustness of her strength.

III

The causes which induce statesmen to disbelieve in the Ten Commandments are many. They believe that the world is governed by greed and its servants; that, though the Commandments are read aloud in churches, Lombard and Wall streets, together with all the little byways and alleys which branch therefrom, pay no heed. If that belief is correct, are they justified? Shall a king or a secretary of state lie because the citizens are liars? It is written, "Thou shalt not follow the multitude to sin." Shall statesmen never lead?

They disbelieve because they lack courage to hear "simple truth miscalled simplicity." They are tempted to fight the devil with his

own weapons. They see offices and honors immediately above them stretching out their arms. They distrust long aims, for men are creatures of short life, and, outside of their individual experience, are skeptical of cause and effect. They feel that might will prevail, whatever right may do. They see straight before them the easy path smoothed by the feet of little men. Their hearts are not lifted up to the great interests of the nation. They find that it is difficult for crawling things to stand erect. So statesmen wander to and fro over the face of the earth, seeking approval of constituents and patrons, harking to the murmurs of the crowd, and "Nel mondo non è, se non volgo," as Machiavelli says.

Moreover, our rulers blindfold themselves, repeating, as we know, that matters of state are so vast, so complicated, so profound, that they cannot be judged by ordinary standards, not if there were a hundred commandments instead of ten: —

> John P.
> Robinson he
> Sez they did n't know everythin' down in Judee.

They persuade themselves that they practice some mystery, — priests of Cybele, thyrsus-

bearers of Dionysus; that their actions, like stars, are controlled by skyey laws of which we have no means to judge. It is true that affairs of nations are the greatest matters of business in the world; and yet they have little mimics. The British East India Company, the Dutch East India Company, even in greatness have not been unlike nations. Their corporate business has been vast and complicated. Lesser corporations are of the same genus, many of the same species: "Sic canibus catulos similis." The difference is in degree, not in kind. When the president and directors of a railroad company lower their rates till they have broken a weaker rival, then buy half the stock and one share more, or when they make a bargain with other railroad companies not to carry freight at less than a certain price, and then privily contract with great shippers to violate that bargain, their acts are of the kind known as *those justified by reasons of state.*

Affairs corporate, in like manner as national affairs, influence those who conduct them. Brown, Jones, and Robinson are good husbands, honest, upright, church-going men, keeping faith and eschewing evil. The mo-

ment that they form the B. J. R. Company, impersonality enwraps them like a witch's cloak. They have done nothing but combine their goods, yet that union acts like poison. Brown waters the stock, Jones bribes his alderman, Robinson marks the nick of time to break a bargain. In the dregs of their minds is some vague notion that a man of business is nothing but a money-getting animal; that, as Nature has made money his end, she has endowed him by implication with the right to pursue all convenient means to that end. They scent nothing but their duty to increase dividends by hook and crook for their stockholders, who, strange to say, are one Brown, one Jones, and a certain J. P. Robinson. This is the way with statesmen: they do not know that a nation has a soul.

These are the little causes which conspire together to keep a nation from the path of the Ten Commandments, but behind them there is one great cause, a vast, vague, powerful force, that seems to move among the affairs of nations like a current through the waters. It is recognized by all, but it is known to men by different names. Some form this idea of it, some that. Professor Washburn

Hopkins calls it, in its relation to Great Britain, the "higher morality." Senator Beveridge calls it, in its relation to the United States, "racial tendency." He says, "Their racial tendency is as resistless as the currents of the sea, or the process of the suns, or any other elemental movement of nature, of which that racial tendency is itself the most majestic." Others, again, call it "Destiny," and others the "Will of God." There is always difficulty in giving the appropriate and characteristic name to a force till it be well understood. This force is very simple, and should be well understood. It is an instinct, a powerful instinct. But instincts are not blindly to be followed. Even upon an instinct must judgment be passed, whether it shall be strengthened and obeyed or thwarted and disobeyed.

It needs no knowledge of sociology or biology to see that a nation has life, health, growth, and decay, like an animal; that it has a structure, divided into parts, and maintains life by means of organs with allotted functions. It has a governing power, centralized in its head or capital, which both directs and depends upon the whole body politic. It

has members of offense and defense; it has means of communication between its several parts, — roads, rivers, wires, — which show like a diagram of nerves and muscles; it has an ever-hungry appetite, and at times even exhibits the rudiments of a moral sense. It is composed of a multitude of units, all of which act separately for their private good, and are often slow to act together for the benefit of the aggregate. Groups of individual units perform different functions. Such a whole is not a special creation, nor does it vary greatly from the ordinary type of organism on this planet. A nation is simply the largest of organisms; the forces which control it are primitive instincts; the "higher morality" or "racial tendency" being the chief nerve of the alimentary canal. The vibrations of this nerve shake the faith of our statesmen in the Ten Commandments.

But though a nation is an organism, and has structure and organs like another, there is a respect in which it differs from other low organic aggregates. In the latter the individual cells are of inferior nature to the aggregate to which they belong, — it owes them no obedience; whereas, in the case of nations,

citizens are of superior nature to the nation. The lower orders of organisms rightly follow what instincts they have, because instincts are the highest springs of action they know. The cell has no conscience which it can set up in opposition; it cannot appeal to a higher law or urge its own experience. But the presumption in favor of an instinct — that it is good — does not hold in the case of nations. Statesmen cannot invoke the authority of the polyp.

It must be remembered, too, that the worth of an instinct is to be judged by the length of time it has been tried, and by the success it has achieved. The instincts in man and his progenitors have been at work for ages. Man has triumphed over all his competitors; his race will endure as long as this globe is inhabitable. His instincts have proved their virtue; yet many of them must be governed, controlled, and rebuked. This national instinct, "higher morality," "racial tendency," or alimentary nerve, has existed but a few thousand years; its future is uncertain, its services in the past are doubtful. It has often brought war, destruction, and suspicion to Europe; it has prevented the in-

terchange of wealth and of knowledge; it has crushed forms of civilization which would be most useful now; when has it brought peace, fraternity, or happiness? Was it national feeling that produced Socrates, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, St. Francis, Dr. Channing, Phillips Brooks? Did nationality produce Jesus?

So we find that this great force, which bears statesmen hither and thither, like cockles on the tide, is nothing but the great national instinct of greed, the craving of the belly. What power has it to excuse statesmen for breaches of the moral law?

IV

Where there is plain wrong there must be a remedy. It is impossible to believe that men, creatures of reason and of experience painfully bought, will leave nations to the blind guidance of rude instincts which spring, like maggots from cheese, out of the union of many men. We must shun these guides. Let us not fear to follow our private faith in international matters. Let us not be cowed by apparent failure. Let us serve our God; let us refuse to worship the aggrandizement of our

country. If our country is fitted to advance the causes for which great men have lived and died, we are granted the privilege of serene patriotism. If it is not, let us face the consequences. It may be that this system of division of mankind into nations has had its day; perhaps nations lag superfluous on the stage. The purpose that they were contrived to serve, the union of people of one blood, and the preservation of the purity of that blood, they have not served. There is not one nation of pure breed and native blood; and people of the same race are divided into different nations, — England and the United States, Spain and Mexico, Portugal and Brazil, France and the Province of Quebec, Germany and Austria. Nations may be mere temporary makeshifts to bridge a gap while mankind prepares some better means of serving its interests. There are signs that this system of nations is breaking up, to make way for a cosmopolitan system. Science with its locomotive forces, commerce with its maxim "Ubi bene ibi patria," democracy with its brotherhood of man, are daily undermining the national system. World's fairs, peace conferences, international labor societies,

drawings together of Latins and of Anglo-Saxons, — all indicate the coming of a new system, without need of weapons of offense and defense, and with no national belly to be filled.

The substitution of a cosmopolitan system with its ethical laws, in the place of our national system with its individualistic laws, will no doubt be a long task. Two famous endeavors to effect that substitution have been made in the past by the European world. The first was the Roman attempt at universal empire, which failed because no one people can supply and adjust the amount of capacity necessary to administer the affairs of the world. The lesson from this attempt is that not empire, but federation, is the true political step toward a cosmopolitan system. The second was the attempt of the Roman Church to make a political Christendom, by bringing all nations into a common obedience to an ecclesiastical Christianity. But the evil conduct of her great priests weakened the Church, and the strong instincts of nationality foiled the attempt. The lesson from this failure is that the fruits of religion cannot grow upon political graftings. An attempt

at universal empire is not likely to be made again by one nation; but it may well be that Christianity, embodying as it does great truths of human experience, will be the chief factor in the federation of the world; that Cosmopolitanism will be a real Christendom under a new name, and supplant the crew of nations; that Christian laws will oust national instincts. For though Cosmopolitanism does not prevent, nor pretend to prevent, the struggles among individuals, it substitutes symbols of peace in place of national flags, those great exemplars of the brute struggle for dominion; it annuls the sanction given by national customs, by bloody victories, by vulgar history, to the doctrine that might makes right; it brings in the reign of law and of a public opinion which is continually more and more affected by Christianity. Centuries may have to pass into a millennium first, but the longer the road the greater the need of haste.

There are three matters to be recognized clearly. The first is that there is nothing peculiar or mysterious about politics or international relations. When two or three men live within hail of one another, political relations begin. Politics begin when men realize

that other men are forces to be considered. Men meet, bow; each drives his wagon to the right; one sells, another buys; they fence their acres in. They put their heads and arms together to chop down a tree, to mend the road, to regulate county matters with the next community. Whether they like it or not, politics have begun, and ethical relations have begun. Men cannot separate politics from ethics. Wherever two or three men are gathered together, the moral law is present among them. Rightly to understand that law is the chief problem of life, and mankind has long been busy at the task; but the immediate matter for men is to understand that what is true of two men and three gathered together is true of tens of millions. Are men to recognize this law, which acts on the individual and on society, only when the company is small and they can see the whites of one another's eyes? The duty of the state is to recognize the scientific truth of the universality and persistence of the moral law, and to put it to use in state affairs.

The second important matter is to recognize that education is one of the main functions of a government. Misled by practical

difficulties of machinery, by old custom, and by many repetitions, lawyers and lecturers talk of the executive duties of the executive, of the legislative duties of the legislature, as if those terms bounded the subject. Rarely does a man, as Bagehot did in England, stop to look at the real nature of the functions of President and of Congress. A chief function is to instruct the people by example. The reason that a good and able man should be chosen president rather than a bad and able man is, not that he will execute the laws more promptly and more exactly, but that it is important that a conspicuous object in the nation's eye should be good. One reason that good men, and not bad, should be chosen senators is that speeches in the Senate should fill the newspapers with honest thought that will be good for all to read. The influence of men in high places is far-reaching; people take their standards of conduct as they do the fashions of their dress. See the effect of a virtuous court on the manners of a people.

The third matter is the immediate need of plain speech. Shams must be rent asunder, no matter how high the motives which support them. Statesmen must speak out straight

from the heart. It is in this that Senator Beveridge and Colonel Denby have rendered so salutary a service. Whatever may be the justice of their views on current policy, they have opened the attack against sham. Let us all speak plainly, and the American people — among whom the great social experiments are to be tried — will have the front place in the ranks of nations, to say whether the partisans of the national belly or the partisans of the national conscience shall prevail, and what America will do to smooth the way for a real Christendom.

MARK TWAIN

MARK TWAIN

I

We have learned from M. de Tocqueville and Mr. Bryce what foreigners deem the effects of democracy on political institutions, and lately from Mr. James, Mr. Wells, Mr. Münsterberg, and M. Bourget what they find to be the effects of democracy on social conditions; but as yet we have no such authoritative pronouncements of what foreigners think about the effects of democracy on literature. Perhaps they do not think about the matter at all, perhaps they maintain an indifferent or a discreet silence. It would be interesting to learn what they do think of our literature; because, here in America, democracy is making its first literary experiment.

The Athens of Plato and Euripides, the Rome of Cicero and Virgil, the Florence of Dante and Boccaccio, were certainly not democracies; for democracy, roughly defined, means a society in which the Christian conception of equality in the sight of God has

been a practical force, in which the enthusiasms of liberty and fraternity have tempered the public mind. Democracy in any such sense is a modern experiment; and the modern democracies have not paid much attention to literature. Switzerland, for example, has produced little or no national literature, for Rousseau, Amiel, Rod, and others, who were Swiss by birth or who lived in Switzerland, are, as men of letters, really Frenchmen. France has kept its literature essentially aristocratic; it has maintained the old traditions of dignity, the veneration of form, the dominating Academy. Mexico and the republics of South America have been too busy with the pressing question of political equilibrium to think very much about literature. So our literature, apart from any other consideration, is interesting as the subject of a new experiment, the working of democracy on literature.

For the moment one may imagine a foreigner on the prow of an incoming steamer as it approaches its New York pier, staring at the remarkable effect of place and circumstances on the art of building, and wondering what he should find in literature; would that

art be equally novel, equally exaggerated, equally practical, equally suggestive of frontier civilization? We could scarcely expect him to come with a mind free from preconceptions on the subject.

Nobody, however eager to be impartial, can divest himself of his education. This foreigner, bred for instance at the university of Paris, would bring with him certain notions about literature that he would regard as axiomatic; maxims from Horace, passages from Goethe, judgments of Sainte-Beuve, dicta by Scherer, which would seem necessary corollaries from those axioms; theories about urbanity, sobriety, passion, form, about the relations between literature and life, all of which would fit and supplement the axioms and corollaries. He certainly could not hold the judicial balance steady; but is there elsewhere an education, our own for example, that would banish the spirit of prejudice better than his? Our immediate concern is with his theories about the influences exercised on literature by aristocracy and democracy respectively. We cannot tell what these would be; all we can do is to put ourselves in his place and guess as well as we can at his ideas.

II

A democracy sets great store by the feelings. In its eyes what society needs are free and unimpeded channels for emotional communication, for the passage of enthusiasm. It demands an all-embracing circuit for volts of joy, triumph, anger, moral indignation, self-satisfaction; it expects literature to be an emotional conduit. An aristocracy, on the other hand, implies a rejection of these democratic notions; it is a system of divisions and separations; it maintains dykes and defenses against the rising tides of our common human feelings. Intellectual enjoyment, intellectual appreciation, intellectual achievement, cannot belong to the masses; they belong to the few, to clubs limited in membership and defended by most rigorous committees of admission. The multitude is not intellectually clubbable. In fact the few and the many seem to belong to different species. On the one hand is a disdainful, intellectual aristocracy; on the other, an emotional, self-satisfied, homogeneous democracy.

This division is of course very rude. One can hardly put any man wholly in either

category; most men have elements that belong to both sides, but there is almost always, except in the case of a few balancing minds, a preponderance of traits that carry a man to one side of the dividing line or the other. Deep down in every breast is some prevailing tendency that turns the heart towards the majority or towards the minority. Education, family tradition, pecuniary circumstances, the political constitution of one's country, the creed of the most potent personalities within one's neighborhood, help or hinder that natural tendency; but deeper than all lies the primary instinct of seeking or avoiding the multitude; that is one of the inherent characteristics of human nature.

Instances (of which the foreigner would be full) make the distinction clearer. Of all novelists of the nineteenth century since the early days of Goethe and Manzoni, at least of all who have attained celebrity, Turgenieff is the most aristocratic. He has in abundance the aristocratic qualities, — refinement, grace, delicacy, the charm of melancholy, the beauty of tragedy, and complete indifference to popular sympathy. He is not merely indifferent to the multitude, but also uncon-

scious of it. The aristocrat can only speak to a small number of people; he feels that his language is incomprehensible, in all the meanings that he cares about, to more than a few; he prefers silence to the misunderstandings and the blank starings of the crowd. The democrat thirsts for sympathetic echoes and reëchoes of his own emotions. He likes a mental omnibus, and falls to speech with each and all of his fellow passengers; he expands and glows under the genial influences of packed humanity; he will go anywhere at any time to get into human relations with anybody. Aristocrats like Turgenieff cannot mount into such an omnibus; they feel cold chills at the mere rumbling of its wheels, and had rather go by themselves forty miles afoot than in such a vehicle. To them language is not a human bond, but a tool for thought or the substance of art. To us Americans, Turgenieff presents a shy, shrinking evasiveness. That is because we are on the outside of his interests and experiences; he, perhaps, is correspondingly outside of ours, but he is unconscious of that, and we are intensely conscious of our exclusion. Contrast him with a man like Dickens. There we are

on the inside; we are in the very thick of Dickens's interests. We are entirely at home, elbowing and being elbowed, laughing, giggling, sobbing in a perspiration of sentimentality, greeting, shaking hands, thumping on the back and being thumped, in the most human, democratic, and delightful way. We are the stuff that attracts Dickens's attention, we are common human beings, and we rejoice in his novels because we know that thousands and thousands have thumbed them.

Take another instance of aristocracy. M. Melchior de Vogüé is, one may venture to say, the most aristocratic of living writers. From him, a wholly unconscious teacher, one receives a lesson; and the most fruitful part of the lesson, if it is also the least agreeable, is that we of the outside can never really understand aristocracy. Few men, if any, can cross in comprehension the barrier between race and race; few men or women can put themselves in the place of the other sex; and very few of the democracy can comprehend the essential qualities of aristocracy. The aristocrat remains an object of suspicion, of indignation, of scorn, to the democrat; and to the aristocrat the

democrat must always, when noticed, seem very vulgarly gregarious. And yet, after a dozen pages of Vogüé, our own world, say of New York, becomes dim and incomprehensible, unrelated to what one feels are the achievements of civilization. The quiet, the calm, the emphasis upon personal dignity, the reticence of self, the shrinking from the stare of curiosity, the satisfaction with what seemed at first mere ghosts, gradually act upon us like hypnotic passes; we seem to recede from the gorgeous structures of our own triumphant self-satisfactions, from the *fanfares* of publicity, from the flash and fulmination of our democratic successes. We become slowly aware of an importance in conventions that we have judged obsolete. The term "gentleman," loaded with its fantastic burden of all sorts of inherited, arbitrary, unreasonable elements, takes shape, grows intelligible, and develops beauty, charm, interest, and significance. We are puzzled, troubled, embarrassed by a sudden and surprising sense of being excluded from something vaguely yet enticingly desirable.

To make it more definitely clear that limitation, narrowness, the exclusion of the

large majority, the rejection of the claims of democratic emotion, are marks of aristocracy, let us take an instance where we remain thankful to be excluded. Take Gabriele D'Annunzio, *enormiter memoratus*. D'Annunzio concerns himself with matters which are excluded by all that we believe civilization ought to be striving for; on every page he arouses contradiction and opposition. Yet D'Annunzio is an aristocrat. Aristocracy is by no means a collection of virtues or of virtuous intentions; it is a tendency of thought and conduct that springs from an original twist of the character; and D'Annunzio's self-restraint, his reticence, his conception of tragedy, his indifference to popular feelings, are eminently aristocratic. The essential fact is that we, the multitude, are excluded; we have no part in his interests and sympathies. Gradually, unless (as is usually the case) our strong democratic ethics obscure our vision, we perceive the refinement of training, the poise of manner, the intense solicitude for standards that are not ours, the breeding that comes with inherited traditions, the noble outline of classical form, which are all marks of aristocracy.

Assuredly our incoming foreigner, bred among some such conceptions and prejudices, can hardly approach our literature with impartiality. He comes warped by an old-world bias in favor of what he deems an essentially and exclusively aristocratic matter, — art. How are we to put our side of the case most forcibly, most effectively?

III

One may concede many good qualities to the spirit of aristocracy in literature, but one must not concede too much. The cause of literary democracy is by no means a cause of negations, and especially not of the negations of excellence. The great emotions of mankind have expressed themselves in literature in eternal forms, in the gospels, in folk songs, in fairy tales and ballads; but these are the work of earlier generations; they go back to a time when the author was hidden by the crowd that took up his words, added to them, modified them, and obliterated the name of the creator. They are the products of democracy in the truest sense, but they do not serve our present purpose; they are not what we mean to-day by democracy in

literature. We mean the manifestation of democratic forces in the works of men of letters, and to defend our cause we are required to produce an American man of letters in whom those forces are conspicuous.

One need not demand a noisy creed of liberty, equality, and fraternity; that phrase has become too elementary an expression of faith, it is the child's catechism. The most brilliant democratic achievement for a man of letters now is to be so truly imbued with large human sympathies as to become the voice, the type, the effigy of a nation. An aristocrat cannot express a nation's traits, character, habits of mind; a member of the small minority cannot represent the great majority. The aristocrat may represent one aspect, one tendency, one trait, but how can he really represent the common element, the pervading essence, of a nation? That would be a contradiction in terms. In cases of renown, where an aristocrat, an Isaiah or a Dante, is said to represent his nation, the truth is that the nation, the majority that stopped its ears or voted for banishment, has passed away and been forgotten; it has left no record. The floods of time have swept it away; but

the man Isaiah or the man Dante, founded on the rock of his own individuality, remains like "a great seamark standing every flaw." We assume that Isaiah has a Hebraic character, that Dante has a Florentine character, and so we are induced to believe that Jewry of the captivity, Italy of the awakening, were passionate, spiritual peoples. That is a mere hypothesis. We know those two burning souls, but we do not know their nations. They represent their nations only to the extent that every man has in him some national traits. If they are representative to a greater degree than that, it is by mere chance. Only a democrat, a man compact of the nation's essential traits, can represent it.

If a nation of any period (the Jewry of Isaiah, the Florence of Dante, the America of to-day) wishes to live and be remembered, it must find some individual imbued with the democratic spirit to express its form, to embody its genius. Such a man must be compounded of ordinary and of very extraordinary qualities. A nation is indeed a mighty and majestic creature. It overwhelms us by its giant size; it seems, when near at hand, a great whirlwind of din and tumult, a mad

conflict of innumerable forces. The vastness and complexity of its activities, the rush and roar of millions, busily living, — each several bunch of quivering nerves following, in the midst of the general hurly-burly, its individual thread, and all together weaving a great warp and woof, — bewilder and awe us. But all is chaotic. What, we ask, is this tremendous confusion; what does it mean? There is no plan, order, method, so far as we can see. Then, if a man steps forth, and in himself reveals the pattern of the cloth, stands out as the effigy, as embodying some essence, of the whole, and by his explanation gives form, intelligibility, coherence, mutual interdependence to the whole; gives the clue to the situation, the key to the mysterious order; enables us to see the uniformity, the clanship, the embodied esprit de corps; we say, Hurrah! Here is a democrat! Such a man is Mark Twain.

At the mention of his name the drift towards a depreciation of the democratic influences in literature is arrested. Democracy at once takes the offensive and roundly asserts itself. In his books Mark Twain has set forth, and in himself he embodies, the traits,

the humors, the virtues, of a distinct people. So regarded, he has in our literature no equal, and in life he has had but one superior, Abraham Lincoln. This is the explanation of Mark Twain's fame. There are few things as interesting, as attractive, as instructive, as the man who, without sacrificing a jot of his own individuality, stands out as the type of his country. He has in him one source at least of the fascination that a great work of art possesses, the embodiment of the type in the individual. This the English felt when they received him with so much open-armed enthusiasm last summer. If our America as we have known it, as it has been, and as, under compulsion of a rapid evolution it is now ceasing to be, shall change and be transmuted into another and different America, it has now in Mark Twain's books a literary monument, and it will not be forgotten. This is Mark Twain's real claim to a lasting memory.

Mark Twain says, in his discussion with M. Paul Bourget: "There isn't a single human characteristic that can be safely labeled 'American.' There isn't a single human ambition, or religious trend, or drift of

thought, or peculiarity of education, or code of principles, or breed of folly, or style of conversation, or preference for a particular subject for discussion, or form of legs or trunk or head or face, or expression, or complexion, or gait, or dress, or manners, or disposition, or any other human detail, inside or outside, that can rationally be generalized as 'American.'" He admits, however, that "there are a few human peculiarities that can be generalized and located here and there in the world and named by the name of the nation where they are found." One must be cautious with Mark Twain, both in his denials and his admissions; at any moment he may be amusing himself at our expense. Yet, as he stands on a platform, makes a speech, tells a story, or sits in his study and sends forth volume after volume, he can hardly joke himself away. He at least is a fact, and a fact that proves the national type. He cannot joke himself into an Englishman, not for a moment. Huck Finn and Gavroche are not more distinct. There are always forces at work that affect the whole personality, just as there are forces that affect the voice. The cotton crop, the climate, the

negro, the Mississippi, have been influences in the South for the formation of a Southern type; and throughout our country for the last three hundred years physical and moral causes have been working upon the immigrants to create a type; and, among living men, that type is best embodied in Mark Twain.

Here, at any rate, our foreigner has our best argument. Here is something that can scarcely be matched elsewhere. What Englishman stands for England, what Frenchman stands for France, what German for Germany, what Italian for Italy, in this vividly typical way? The same admiration that approves Rodin's Penseur as emblematic, as allegorical, as an embodiment in small compass of something vast; that approves the Dresden Madonna as the expression of ideal motherhood; that approves the Hermes of Praxiteles as the symbol of divine *insouciance;* the Gothic cathedral as the sign of man's aspirations towards God; this same admiration must, modified and diminished but still of the same quality, be bestowed upon the man who is the type of a nation; for, though the nation itself, and time and

circumstances, are coöperative, the man is himself the artist as well as the work of art. This is the reason why the most interesting part of Mark Twain's books is where he tells us about himself and his own experiences.

It was not merely the force of circumstances that turned his mind to American things. The genius of America took the little boy, put him at her school, taught him her *a b c*, instructed him in her knowledge, bred him and trained him to be her disciple and biographer. The genius of America guided him through life. Had it not been for her, he might have gone to Harvard College, and then his talents would have been swerved from their natural task, and he have been left groping all his life in ineffectual endeavor. His life on the Mississippi, his wanderings in the West, his experiences as a journalist, were the best education for his talents. The Mississippi was his alma mater. The random chats in the pilot-house of the Mississippi steamboat, in the cosmopolitan mining camps, in the barroom of a Nevada politician, at the ranch of an English exile, meetings with the motley adventurers that flocked to the golden bait, consti-

tuted an admirable education in the unwritten American constitution. If the genius of America guided and taught him, he was an industrious and diligent pupil, and deserves the praise of being fellow craftsman and efficient co-worker in the production of himself.

The foreigner, of course, may be a disagreeable fellow. He may say : I admire the Penseur because I admire thought, the Dresden Madonna because I admire ideal motherhood, the Hermes because I admire anything divine, the Gothic arches because of their emotional vigor; I admire the typical Englishman, if there is one, because I admire England, mother of government, mother of literature, mother of men ; but as to America, why should I admire what is typical until I have learned to admire the type that is typified? This is perhaps unduly frank in a foreigner, but it suggests what may be a fact. It may be our patriotism that hoists our enthusiastic admiration of Mark Twain; it is in part, we must concede, an ebullition of self-love and self-satisfaction that shakes and waves and flourishes it in the air. We are for the moment put in the predicament that we admire Mark Twain because he is an Amer-

ican and we admire America because it produces Mark Twain. This is an eminently reasonable, satisfactory, and consistent circle to us; but further arguments are necessary to convince a foreigner who comes here weighted, as we feel sure, with aristocratic prejudices, that Mark Twain, this eminent product of democracy, is, for him, bred in an alien atmosphere on distant traditions, a person of intrinsic value.

IV

Except in such terms of national interpretation, it is difficult to think of Mark Twain. We know his high character, his courage, his public spirit, his sense of duty, his energy, his patience, his kindliness, his chivalry, his adventurous temperament, and his morality; and we feel a sense of satisfaction to think that, fall as far behind and below as most of us do, he is the type to which we belong. He inspires us with a greater confidence in democracy, a greater firmness of patriotism, a happier serenity for the future. But one wonders how it happens that these are the traits that come first to mind while thinking about a man of letters. How is it that he is not a great manufacturer, a leader on one of

the American highways to fortune, a senator, or a justice of the Supreme Court? How is it that by means of books he has been able to make this impression of practical solidity and worth? How does he belong to literature, and why? These are pressing questions as one thinks of the inquiring foreigner newly disembarked, and at the same time runs over in one's mind the list of Mark Twain's books.

He is, his books assure us, a man of letters; but to what branch of literature does he belong? He is not a poet. If a poet could have stood for the national effigy, Walt Whitman would have done so; but America cannot be represented by a poet. The substance of our poetic achievement shows clearly enough that our national energies have sought other fields of effort. On the contrary, Mark Twain indicates where the line lies that divides the American mood from the poetical mood. He indeed rejects the standard of material success, he sympathizes with the independence of the poet, but passion in its antagonism to common sense, imagination in its indifference to solidified fact, beauty in its evanescence, and form (in spite of its numerous contacts

with human experiences and human desires) are to him all parts of a game that, if indeed it be worth the candle, he does not play.

He is not a professed historian. His "Joan of Arc" is an expression of noble enthusiasm. Here we find our self-confident American impatience with half-tones, shadows, uncertainties. To Mark Twain the story of Joan is not the resultant of many forces working together, pushing from many points, all self-asserting but subservient to the final accomplishment, those antagonistic as necessary to her beauty as those that directly support her; to him the story is a miracle of glory on a scaffold of badness. The American practical, hard-headed indifference to the irony in life is one of Mark Twain's distinguishing traits. But though he is not a professed historian, he is in fact the best teller of history that America has produced. "Roughing it," "Tom Sawyer," "Huckleberry Finn," "Life on the Mississippi," are the most instructive books in certain parts of American history that there are. Even "Pudd'nhead Wilson," a prose extravaganza, has bits of information about the character of the negro that cannot be surpassed. As Mark Twain

says, information exudes from him whether he will or no. Certainly Missouri, Nevada, and the Mississippi River have, through him, been able to say some, at least, of the things they have to say.

He does not fit into any division of fiction, as fiction is at present understood. "Innocents Abroad," "Following the Equator," "Roughing It," and others of that sort, which give the predominant tone to his whole work, are books of a kind apart. "Pudd'nhead Wilson" can hardly be called a novel; even "Tom Sawyer," and "Huckleberry Finn," as he takes pains to say, are excluded from a category where plot, dénouement, and the technique of novel-writing are taken seriously. It is in this rejection of categories that Mark Twain shows his originality and American force. He has complete confidence in his own way, he gives full play to his own personality, and proceeds with a quiet disregard of literary experiences elsewhere. He has his own views of life, he has his own views of the New World and the Old, and he regards those views as facts that may without vanity rank with other facts with which people concern themselves. He believes that com-

mon-sense — the common-sense of acuteness, of ingenuity, of familiar conquest of difficulties — has something to say on many subjects, and he wishes to be the one to say it. But in so far as these books are the criticisms of common-sense on men and things, will they last long? Is it the opinion of common-sense or the opinion of trained and disciplined experience that counts in any matter that is of more than ephemeral importance? This is a question that the foreigner propounds. If common-sense is not enough, will their jocose humor save them?

The humor is, of course, the popular element, and popular perhaps because of its simplicity; but simplicity is not the quality that gives the humor its flavor and value. Those are due to a shrewd and homely wisdom which, if not very broad or deep or subtle, is genial, comfortable, and useful. The wisdom that comes from passion, from a profound or noble discontent, from pursuit of intellectual beauty, is another affair; here is the old Ben Franklin wisdom, compact of practical hard sense, the efficient cause of all Yankee success, in a very persuasive and amiable form. There is always

need to emphasize the beneficence of the man who causes laughter. Comedy is usually looked upon as a poor relation to Tragedy, a Cinderella who stays at home beside the vulgar but cozy kitchen fire while her gorgeous sister in sceptred pall goes sweeping by to the theatre, to poetry, to novels. Tragedy no doubt presents life in its vividest aspects, and, as life is our chief concern in this world, Tragedy may well claim precedence; but Comedy is the pleasanter sister, more affable, more sociable, and plumper.

Yet Comedy is of two moods. In one she shows her relationship; she is grim, savage, scornful, and, even when pitiful and tender, stays near Tragedy. She looks on life — as we look at a monkey cage and watch the sad-eyed, nimble-fingered little beasts — with emotions that break in tears and laughter. Like Figaro she goes: "*me moquant des sots, bravant les méchants, je me hâte de rire de tout — de peur d'être obligé d'en pleurer.*" In her other mood she is all for recreation, amusement, diversion. Indignant at the permanent presence of labor and pain, of drudgery, sweat, and weariness, she proffers her medicine, the comic, the ludicrous, the

grotesque, the jocular, seeking to ease her patients with a laugh. To this mood of Comedy Mark Twain belongs. He is kind, tender, and compassionate, a good Samaritan, and his mission is to give his fellows laughter. He has proved himself to be a "neighbor" to all of us.

Cervantes is, one may assume, the greatest European classic in Comedy; and, though Cervantes habitually shares her sterner mood, he also revels in her softer mood; and it is to Cervantes in this softer mood that one's memory wanders when Mark Twain is at his best. That best is assuredly in "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn." Purge these stories of their melodramatic emphasis (for events may be historical and yet too melodramatic for comedy), strip them of the more conventional and boisterous jokes, and one has two figures here that go into the small group composed of Sam Weller, Tartarin, M. Jourdain, Sancho Panza, and a few others. The inner circle, where the habitués of the Boarshead Tavern take their ease, where Tam O' Shanter drinks his reaming swats, where Don Quixote is the master spirit (Comedy cannot say her last word without

the help of Tragedy), is not far away. One does not forget the immense advantage Sancho Panza possesses as attendant upon Don Quixote, and that Tom and Huck are hampered by the trappings of melodrama; but that only makes Tom and Huck more extraordinary. They do not tread the low-down, ornery way that is followed by the countless multitudes who people the pages of fiction; they have embarked on the river of fame (attended by the Duke of Bilgewater and the unfortunate Dauphin), in company with Sancho Panza. These *gamins*, too, are connected with Cervantes by right of descent. One of the earliest of the picaresque stories is Cervantes' "Rinconete y Cortadillo," two little Huck Finns of Seville; and from these two, through a Spanish and English pedigree, is descended, though all unconscious of any descent higher than "Pap," Huckleberry Finn of Missouri.

Here the English-speaking world has found that mixture of humor, kindliness, and ripe sagacity which makes comedy enduring. Huck reminds one of Murillo's little melon-eating rowdies, with their smeared faces, their bare legs, their sturdy reality, and their boyish

charm. He is such another, and no wonder the world has welcomed him enthusiastically. If they are Spanish, he and Tom, in their resourcefulness, gallantry, good humor, and decency are a not too highly flattered picture of American youth as it exists in boyhood before the industrial mælstrom sucks it in.

Certainly we can ask the foreigner to accept these two figures as a contribution to the literature of the world. But can we go further? Can we offer him with any real hope of success the jokes, the conceits, the stories, the jollity that abound in Mark Twain's other books? Might he not say, "This is for boys, excellent, delightful, diverting, but hardly what we in the old countries call literature"? And should we not be embarrassed in any attempt to insist upon his acceptance of our standards, our pleasures, our appreciations? It may be that Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer are typical of us in another way; that we are not quite grown up as yet in our judgment of what literature is.

But after all why should we care so much for a foreigner's opinion, for a standard acceptable across the water? Why not rest content with our own satisfactions?

V

This species of humor, of which Mark Twain is the most notable practitioner, has been accepted both by foreigners and by ourselves as American; and one can hardly doubt that the adjective is justly applied. Certainly the essential element in this humor lies in expression, in delivery, in the mode of presentation; and that, as we learn on the best authority, is American. Mark Twain says, "The humorous story is strictly a work of art — high and delicate art — and only an artist can tell it. . . . The art of telling a humorous story — understand, I mean by word of mouth, not print — was created in America and has remained at home." One may safely go further, and assert that the humor itself in substance (if the substance here can be separated from form) is American. This fact must be something more than a coincidence; it can hardly be mere chance that Artemus Ward, Mark Twain, Mr. Dooley, and their followers are American. Must not the explanation be found in our democracy?

One would hardly venture to join the large throng who have essayed to define the dis-

tinguishing traits of wit and humor; one may also think that the distinctions that have been drawn are of no great consequence, and yet take a course that avoids both the temerity suggested and the skepticism. One may propose a difference that does not purport to separate wit and humor to right and left by a sharp line, but to distinguish them by their inward and controlling tendencies. Wit, as contrasted with humor, is essentially aristocratic; while humor, as opposed to wit, is essentially democratic. Wit, such wit for instance as is found in English and French classics, interests educated men by its intellectual elements; it appeals to minds that concern themselves with ideas, that have been subject to training. La Rochefoucauld, Sydney Smith, Sheridan, Alphonse Daudet, Anatole France, Bernard Shaw, Mrs. Wharton, are names that indicate what one means by wit. In everybody's mind, marred perhaps by an imperfect memory, are many instances. For example: See, says Heine, what a miserable fate overtook the three chief adversaries of Napoleon: Castlereagh cut his own throat, Louis Dix-huit rotted upon his throne, and Professor Saalfeld is still a professor at Göt-

tingen. Or take Voltaire's lines (was it Voltaire?) apropos of a translation of the book of Lamentations by Abbé Pompignan,—

> Savez-vous pourquoi Jérémie
> Se lamentait toute sa vie ?
> C'était parce qu'il prévoyait
> Que Pompignan le traduirait.

Or take the scene in the ballad where King John, seated on his throne, with crown of gold on his head, and surrounded by his liegemen so noble of birth, asked the Abbot of Canterbury to tell within one penny what he was worth: —

> For thirty pence our Saviour was sold
> Among the false Jewes, as I have bin told,
> And twenty-nine is the worth of thee,
> For I think thou art one penny worser than He.

Such sayings interest a comparatively small public; they are adapted to men who have undergone an education of a conventional character more than to men as men, children of nature.

Humor, on the other hand, is an emotional, primitive thing; it appeals to the crowd, to the simple, childish human element that is the common property of all men. In some men this common element has been stunted and crushed by discipline and circumstance; in

others it has grown in freedom and remained a dominant element long after the ordinary period of childhood. An aristocrat has his prejudices, he resents the facial contortions, the bodily disquiet, the physical *débâcle* that result from one of Mark Twain's stories; he likes to sit serene and enjoy with dignity the intellectual sport where wit shoots folly as she flies. He does not care to gaze at Mr. Pickwick in the pound or listen to his adventure with the lady in yellow curlpapers; he would not be amused to hear Artemus Ward in his humorous vein. "For instance, he [Artemus Ward] would say eagerly, excitedly, 'I once knew a man in New Zealand who had n't a tooth in his head' — here his animation would die out; a silent, reflective pause would follow, then he would say dreamily, and as if to himself, 'and yet that man could beat a drum better than any man I ever saw.'"[1] But the democrat would laugh as he does at the clown in the circus, with a joyous, careless rapture that awakens risible desires, and also deep and kindly human feelings, in his neighbors. This distinction between wit and humor appears most plainly,

[1] Mark Twain, *How to Tell a Story.*

perhaps, in their defects. The defect of humor is a tendency to degenerate into tomfoolery and horse-play; the defect of wit is a tendency to busy itself with ideas as ideas until, in its ambition to prove its kinship to wisdom, it loses its fun in an attempt to solve some intellectual problem.

Perhaps I exaggerate, perhaps I have distorted the definitions of wit and humor; but, after making allowances for exaggeration and error, enough remains as proof that our American conception of humor is a consequence of democratic influences. For this reason Mark Twain is as notable a representative of democracy in its effect upon literature as he is of America; and in saying this one feels that one has come to the end of the enumeration of Mark Twain's most conspicuous feats. He represents democracy, he embodies our national traits, he is the author of Huckleberry Finn and the giver of laughter, he has been throughout a long life a high ethical influence; these are titles to eminence and gratitude, and few men are as well known throughout Europe and America as Mark Twain, and probably still fewer are as dear to their countrymen as he

is. But this, our captious foreigner may object, is not purely a literary valuation. And if he adds that we are talking of literature, and asks whether we ascribe to Mark Twain a literary importance corresponding, let us say, to that of Ibsen or Tolstoi or Carducci or Zola, what are we to say? Do we feel (as we think what these names, that have occurred to us, mean to the literature of the world) that democracy has put forward in Mark Twain a convincing argument to support its case, against aristocracy, as a beneficent influence on literature; are we prepared to assert that America has produced a man of letters who can seriously be pitted against the leaders of contemporary literature elsewhere? Many may think that they can answer boldly in the affirmative; but others are skeptical, and for them silence is becoming. When the Greek skeptic, Pyrrho, died, his epitaph read: "Pyrrho, are you dead? I do not know." Let us take the benefit of the doubter's position, and say that we do not know.

THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF 1961

THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF 1961

Now that a generation has passed since the disturbed events of which I write, and that most of the actors therein have died, it is possible to sketch, with an impartiality that would have been well-nigh impossible heretofore, the circumstances under which the present Imperial Dynasty mounted the throne of the Americas. Some men still regard the final acts of the drama as so many parricidal thrusts, whereas others heap praises on praises upon the great protagonist. My purpose is to give a brief account of the facts as accurately as I can, not extenuating, not exaggerating, not setting down anything with political bias.

In the ten years from 1950 to 1960 the social and political changes in the United States presaged great events. Scientific discovery was the apparent root of the good or evil. Mr. Phillips and Professor Czerny in their laboratory discovered the marvelous effects produced by radio-electric discharges upon the chemical constituents of the soil. Their most ingenious subsoil batteries by some

method, not yet fully understood, affected the properties of sand and gravel to such a degree that they were converted into pseudo-vegetable mold, and with very slight expense land which had been a desert became productive to an extraordinary extent. The desert lands of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah brought forth crops that the banks of the Nile could not rival. The application of these wonderful scientific discoveries was due entirely to the will and energy of the man who at that time was plain Robert Campbell.

Campbell was born in Ohio, of Scotch-Irish parentage. He was educated at the public schools, and when a lad of fourteen was employed by Mr. Phillips in his laboratory as an assistant. The boy learned far more quickly than his master the value of the discoveries. He left the laboratory, returned at the end of three years with a few thousand dollars, bought the apparently valueless patents, and put them to use in some land in Arizona bought at fifty cents an acre. The history of the next ten years of his life is the story of the development of the arid regions in the southwestern part of the country. The desert bloomed like a rose. Immigrants swarmed

from every country in Europe. The population of Arizona increased a million a year. Men who had earned twenty cents a day found themselves rich. Wheat, corn, rice, and potatoes grew as if by magic in an abundance sufficient to feed the world. Citizenship was granted within a month after declaration of an intention to renounce the old allegiance, and a vast number of immigrants were admitted to the franchise without any knowledge of republican institutions or any interest in them. Mr. Campbell acquired fabulous wealth. Wherever land was barren, there he was besought to bring his healing touch, and in payment of fruitfulness he always took a mortgage upon the land. In seven states his political power was despotic; he controlled conventions; he selected members of Congress; he named the senators. He was the idol of the small proprietors, their savior from the oppression of the great eastern capitalists; he had found them degenerate and on the way to becoming peasants, he raised them to the most compact and important class in the country.

It was about this time that our war with England broke out. President Schmidt hated

the English, and did all in his power to provoke war: he persuaded Congress to make discrimination in the tariff to the injury of England and in favor of Germany; and with no color of excuse he closed the Panama Canal to all vessels flying the British flag; he violated the rules of neutrality in the revolt of South Africa, known as the Second Boer War, and insulted the British Ambassador at a reception in the White House. It is supposed that Schmidt provoked the war for the aggrandizement of himself and his family. Our ships, it was officially said, excelled the British in every particular, and outnumbered them three to two; but the successful termination of the war was due, not to our naval victories, — for by some mischance we were vanquished in the two engagements off Long Island, — but to the fact that England was put on starving rations the day war was declared. This country, with its marvelous development under the Campbell-Czerny patents, had become England's butcher and greengrocer; and the moment supplies were stopped the price of food there went up sixty-fold. The result of the war was that Great Britain ceded to us her Chinese provinces, while we, on our part, agreed not

to discriminate against her either in the tariff or in regard to the Panama Canal. These Chinese provinces, added to our own, made an empire of four hundred millions of people, and as the President, under decisions of the Supreme Court, had, by virtue of the authority appertaining to him as *Pater Patriæ*, complete control, he appointed Campbell, then believed to be in his interest, governor-general. It seemed that China had always affected Campbell's imagination, and he wished very much to go there. From his memoirs, however, we know that he believed that China would be the battlefield in the great international struggle for the domination of the world, and therefore he wished to study the country himself. He went there in 1958, and remained nearly two years. As usual, the country where he went bourgeoned and bloomed. His administration was admirable, — efficiency was established, dishonesty stopped; he ruled despotically, but with absolute justice. The Chinese revenues doubled in the first year. Campbell's personal popularity was immense, and rumor accused him of an ambition to become Emperor of China.

At this time, however, matters were going

ill in America. At the end of ten years the wonderful richness imparted to the soil by the radio-electric treatment departed as mysteriously as it had begun. The great fabric of prosperity fell with its foundation. Half the farmers in the country, and all those in the so-called Campbell states, became bankrupt. Distress spread from the farmers to the manufacturing interests. Railroads fell off in their dividends, factories closed, failure succeeded failure. Of the great cities San Francisco suffered most, as it was the port of shipment for all the grain exported to Asia; but Chicago and New York shared in the losses. The trouble was increased by the fact that, after the war with England, all Europe succeeded in making treaties establishing a common tariff against the United States. The respective European governments at last understood that it was a struggle between continents; their mutual jealousies were laid aside, and a commercial compact was made between them. In spite of these mishaps the country did not lose confidence in Campbell.

The financial crisis in the United States was reached in October, 1960, shortly before the presidential election. There was division

in the ranks of the Republican party because, while President Schmidt, who had served two terms, desired to serve a third term or else have his son, Hugo Schmidt, nominated, several powerful senators had their own ambitions, and were rigorously opposed, as they declared, to permitting the president's office to become hereditary in the Schmidt family. The Democratic and Socialist parties, though small and broken into petty groups, having dwindled to almost nothing during the ten fat years, began to show their heads. New England had a party of its own, and hinted at secession. The House of Representatives, consisting, of course, solely of nominees of the senators, divided in the same way as the Senate; but as the House had long ceased, except in theory, to be a coördinate branch of the legislature, its actions were of slight importance. The Republican convention had been held in the beginning of October. In the last century it used to be held in June or July, but since the time when the election of the president became determined by the action of the Republican convention, there had been no need for a long political campaign. There was a great struggle between the Schmidts and

their adversaries; but the President had used his patronage lavishly, and Wall Street, fearing that a change in the government might add to the business difficulties, spent money with unexampled daring, and Hugo Schmidt was nominated by the convention.

The country had for some thirty years been governed by an oligarchy represented by the Senate. Almost every great combination of capital had its senator; in fact, it had become the custom for a retiring president of a billionaire corporation to enter the Senate, and continue to watch over its interests. Had it not been for the singular concatenation of events that produced the great panic, the system might have lasted indefinitely. Property was gradually settling in strata; the capitalists coalesced into a natural aristocracy, the professions constituted an upper middle class, the tradespeople a lower middle class, and as soon as the agricultural interests had been properly handled, the actual farmers would gradually have developed into an American equivalent for a peasantry. But that was not to be. No sooner was Hugo Schmidt nominated than disaffection appeared. Senator Mason of Massachu-

setts refused to be bound by the action of the convention, and New England acted with him; Senators Brown of Washington, Petersen of Minnesota, and Elkinhorn of Alabama followed his example. The Campbell states held a convention by themselves and declared for Campbell. The Schmidts acted with their usual vigor: they offered Campbell the office either of Secretary of State or of Vice-Suzerain of South America; they took all possible measures to secure election officers favorable to their interest throughout the United States; they issued a proclamation depriving Chile of all legal rights, as punishment for its late revolt, and offered its land as public property to all loyal citizens who should receive the proper certificates from Washington. The President sent a mandate to the members of the Supreme Court, then away for the summer recess, to convene in Washington, and ordered various regiments to the chief cities of his opponents. His adversaries were not idle. In New England members of the Republican convention who had supported Schmidt were indicted for high treason on the charge of attempting to make the office

of president hereditary, and bills were filed in the United States Courts to restrain election officers from printing the name of Schmidt's electors on the official ballots. Campbell sailed at once from Hong Kong, and arrived in San Francisco on October 9, after a voyage of four days. There he met his supporters, and issued a proclamation to the effect that the action of the Republican convention was illegal and void for bribery and corruption; that the convention which had nominated him was regular and valid; that he was the only legal candidate in the field, and that he would support and maintain the Constitution, cost him what it might. Possession of the vast machinery of the government in all its parts, and the custom of the voters apathetically to vote the Republican ticket, were likely to give the Schmidts victory, but Campbell was fertile in resources.

It so happened that on October 13 there was a panic in every stock exchange in the country; railroad bonds fell off twenty to forty points; industrial stocks went up and down like feathers in the wind; but the great blows fell upon government bonds.

The issues for the extravagant undertakings of the administration in the years of prosperity, especially for the construction of automobile roads and for the maintenance of our garrisons in South America and in China, had been enormous. The country had played the prodigal; it was said that every tradesman had a country house, and every gentleman kept his yacht; and now the balloon had burst and everybody was bruised. Government bonds fell on October 13 from 130 to 110, on the 14th to 95, on the 15th to 60. People thought that the country was ruined forever; men lost their heads, and acted as if crazed; America, the envy of the world, seemed to fall like Lucifer. On the morning of the 16th Robert Campbell entered the clubrooms of the New York Stock Exchange. He was dressed in his undress uniform as governor of the Chinese provinces,—loose white trousers with a purple sash and a loose white silk shirt with a gold collar, and over it a light purple cloak with a border of peacock feathers. His rugged face, cold and calm, with bushy eyebrows, and deep wrinkles around the mouth, looked like bronze. It was one minute before eleven o'clock, the

hour of opening the Exchange, and the brokers were all gathered together. Everybody was there, eleven senators and two hundred and forty representatives, who were accustomed to make the New York Stock Exchange their headquarters when Congress was not in session, also many distinguished citizens. Campbell's entrance was the signal for great excitement; reporters crowded about, hindering the senators in their attempts to greet him. "What will he do, what will he do?" buzzed through the hall. Campbell, who always had a touch of the theatrical in his temperament, motioned the reporters aside, and, bowing somewhat coldly to the senators, asked for his broker. Sonnenschein rushed up and began to whisper. "There is no need for whispers, Mr. Sonnenschein," said Campbell, in a voice loud enough to be heard through the hall; "Robert Campbell is ready to sacrifice his private fortune for his country. You will buy government bonds till my last dollar shall be spent." A cheer went up; the reporters rushed off to telegraph the news over the world; the clock struck eleven, and Sonnenschein's firm bought government bonds as fast as they

could buy. The price rose to 70, to 90, to 110; Campbell bought and bought for immediate delivery; the great bank, known as the "Senate's Own," honored his checks for millions of dollars. The news spread abroad; crowds besieged the Exchange; everybody tried to buy government bonds, and the whole market rallied and rose; bonds and stocks got up like sick men from their beds; the scene outdoes description; merchants who were ready for bankruptcy became rich men again; savings banks which had closed the day before opened their doors, paying and receiving thousands of deposits. At the close of business hours the whole country smiled, like a withered land after a rain. How Campbell was able to pay for the vast amounts of bonds which he had purchased, whether he had used the Chinese funds, as his enemies said, whether he bought and then sold again to himself as the market rose, or whether he and his friends had managed to put their money together for this great political stroke, are questions that everybody asked and Campbell never publicly answered. However it was, the panic had ended, and Robert Campbell

had won the reputation of being the ablest and most patriotic man in the land.

The next day the public learned that he was closeted with the governor and the district attorney for New York County. These men belonged to the Schmidt faction, but rumor said that Campbell had saved them both from beggary, for they were speculators. The day after, a special court of Oyer and Terminer was held, a special grand jury summoned, and that same night the two senators of New York, the two of Pennsylvania, and one of Connecticut, together with the president and half the board of directors of the New York Stock Exchange (all of Schmidt's party), were indicted for conspiracy with the intent fraudulently to injure and destroy certain railroad properties, largely affected by the late panic. Excitement was raised to fever point when the judge refused bail and the alleged conspirators were locked up in the city prison. The Schmidt partisans were very angry. They obtained a decree from the United States Circuit Court quashing the indictments, but the state courts refused to acknowledge its authority. Then they applied to the governor,

who answered that the law must take its course. The President instructed the United States Marshal to release the prisoners; the Marshal took a posse, but the city police prevented them from approaching the jail; the Marshal telegraphed to the President for soldiers, and the President ordered five regiments to the city. The governor called out the militia; there was every prospect of civil war; the country turned instinctively to Campbell. The next day news was radiographed from the Atlantic to the Pacific that Campbell had gone to the state court and offered himself as bail for the prisoners; his bail was accepted, and they were released.

Election day drew near, attended by excitement without parallel. Campbell went all over the country, showering money in gifts to persons whom he was pleased to call his "indigent fellow citizens," as a slight endeavor on his part to repair the great wrongs done to them and the country by the "New York conspirators." The election was at last held on November 6; there were riots in all the great cities, many voting machines were smashed, and thousands of voters deprived of their votes, but the automatic official count

returned Schmidt first, Campbell second, and Elkinhorn of Alabama third. The newspapers resounded with cries of fraud; Elkinhorn mustered out the militia in the Gulf states to support his claim; but Campbell announced that, though he had been deprived of the high office by gross fraud, he would seek no redress, in the fear lest his country might suffer. To the general surprise he returned to China. Those friends who were not in his inner counsels could not understand his action except on the ground of true patriotism, and his popularity with them became almost a passion. Campbell's course made Elkinhorn's movement ridiculous; the militia disbanded, Elkinhorn was arrested on the charge of high treason, but was soon released, as the country plainly showed its desire to avoid internal troubles and return to business, for industry everywhere felt the disastrous effects of the panic.

Affairs remained in this condition till the end of February, when preparations for the inauguration of Hugo Schmidt (Schmidt the Second, as his enemies called him) were being made. Campbell was invited to be present, and accepted; he landed in San Francisco on

February 24, and proceeded to Washington. His friends hailed him as a hero returned from exile, and he spoke at every town on the road, briefly alleging that the first duty of an American was to obey the law, that only in this way would the country be enabled to fulfill its great duties toward God and civilization in the manner in which it had so gloriously done theretofore. On the morning of the 2d of March, a beautiful sunny day, everything seemed as placid as a village Sabbath. That morning the newspapers announced decrees by the United States Circuit Courts in the first, second, fifth, seventh, and thirteenth districts, according to the redistricting of 1952, annulling the presidential election on the grounds of bribery and fraud. There was further news of equal importance: indictments had been found in some forty courts all over the country, state and national, against thirty-three senators and three hundred and forty-seven representatives, all of the Schmidt faction. Besides this the so-called "New York conspirators" had been rearrested, as their bail suddenly declined further responsibility, and had been carried forcibly and secretly to New York. The com-

motion was immense; the President tried to summon soldiers to the capital, but the railroad companies in most cases refused to let their cars be used, and ran their locomotives out of reach of seizure. On the next day it was announced that the United States Circuit Court in Arizona had tried and convicted Hugo Schmidt, President-elect, for a violation of the election laws. His notices of the charge and summons to attend his trial had come by radiograph at eight o'clock the night before, and of course he had not paid any heed to them. The Schmidts, on their side, hurried on preparations for the inauguration. They had provided for great ecclesiastical processions, as part of their strength lay in their religious pose, and they evidently relied on the presence of the clergy to help maintain order. Large forces of the President's guard, as the National Constabulary was called, were under arms day and night. On the morning of the 4th of March Washington was crowded; never had the city worn such a gala aspect. Blue and red, the Schmidt colors, floated under the stars and stripes from every flagpole, and the troops of constables and the uniformed bands of employees of the great trusts all displayed blue

and red. Among the ladies, however, green and white, the Campbell colors, were as frequent as the blue and red, and the contrast made a very gay and splendid sight as the carriages moved slowly down the new boulevard. Down to the 100-yard vertical line the air was full of dirigibles, brave in flags and pennants. It was remarked that several regiments from Arizona had secured positions near the Capitol, and that the uniformed bands of the Copper Syndicate, of the Great Central Railroad, of the Farmers' Union, of the Coal Trust, of the Compressed Air Trust, and of the Combined Radiograph Company, the most powerful corporations in the world, all largely owned by the capitalists of the Campbell faction, occupied the approaches to the Capitol; they, however, all showed the blue and red colors. Afterwards it was learned that they had taken their stations at midnight. By half-past eleven the President-elect and his party came to the steps of the Capitol amid tumultuous cheering. Campbell and a group of senators were close behind him, so that it was difficult to say whether the cheers were all meant for the President or not. The great bells of the New Belfry rang out; the

vast crowd became wonderfully still, it seemed to have fallen asleep. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in his robes, stepped out bareheaded into the vacant space at the top of the steps, and, picking up a copy of the Constitution from the gold table, in a clear, ringing voice bade the President-elect step forward and take the official oath. Hugo Schmidt stepped forth, but one of the Campbell senators pushed by, and, pressing to the Chief Justice, handed him a sealed document. The crowd was as still as death; the breaking of the seal was distinctly heard fifty yards away. The Chief Justice glanced at the document, read it over carefully, and then said deliberately, in his most resonant tones: "The ceremony cannot proceed. I am enjoined by the Circuit Court of this district from administering the oath, on the ground that Hugo Schmidt, alleged President-elect, procured his alleged election by fraud and bribery." The elder Schmidt, turning to Campbell, cried out: "This is your dirty trick!" Then, facing the Chief Justice, he said: "As President of the United States I command you to administer the oath to my successor." The Chief Justice replied: "In

this country not even the President is above the law. I am enjoined. I cannot administer the oath." A great cheer burst forth from every side, and green and white cockades suddenly replaced blue and red down all the lines of uniformed bands and of the Arizona regiments. The elder Schmidt glanced over the multitude, and whispered to his son: "If there is no election, the choice of President falls on Congress under the law of 1936." "Ay," answered Campbell, "Congress must elect." Cries of "Congress!" and "To the House! To the Senate Chamber!" rose on all sides. There was great confusion. Senators and representatives tried to force their way into the Capitol; slowly, one by one, pushing, shoving, shouting, and swearing, they reached the chambers, only to find them filled with armed men, who called themselves special constables, and would let no man enter without proof satisfactory to themselves that he was a duly authorized member of Congress. Outside the crowds knew nothing of what was going on; it was impossible to move, the crush was so dense; men talked and shouted and cheered; women chattered and giggled and fainted; the uniformed bands and the

Arizona regiments stood firm under arms and let nobody pass except upon a countersign. Hours went by; the multitude became hungry; the crowding became more dangerous; many men were knocked down and injured by exploding automobiles; people flocked in from everywhere, lured by the extraordinary rumors. Accidents became frequent; the constables and soldiers tried to disperse the newcomers and relieve the pressure, but with no success. Five thousand and eighty people were killed or seriously injured. At four o'clock the great bells of the New Belfry rang out; under the stars and stripes on the Capitol a great green and white banner was displayed. The two Houses had chosen Campbell President. It appeared that there was a majority of the two Houses present, but, owing to the previous arrests of some supporters of the administration, and the inability of others to prove their identity to the guardians of the two chambers, the Campbell men outnumbered their opponents more than two to one. The election was certified to the Chief Justice, who proceeded to administer the oath to Campbell. There was then a rush for the steps by the blue and red constabulary, but

they were in a small minority, and after twenty minutes of a rough and tough fight, peace was sufficiently restored to allow the ceremony to proceed. The streets were then cleared by the Arizona regiments, the two Schmidts were arrested on the charge of levying war against their country, and a proclamation issued that the proceedings had of necessity been somewhat unusual, if not, strictly speaking, irregular, but that every question would be submitted to the courts, and that the newly elected President would spare not even his life in the preservation of the Constitution.

The next few weeks were comparatively calm, except in New York, where the only acts of violence were committed. Nothing has astonished foreigners more than that these great political events took place, not only without civil war, but practically without any bloodshed. The truth is that Americans have always had an immense love of law and order, and are immensely proud of their Constitution, which has been a guide and stay in all troublous times, and yet has proved itself sufficiently elastic to suit the empire as well as the republic. This elasticity

of the Constitution is mainly due, not to the forefathers who framed it, but to those greater interpreters of the last century who have realized that law is founded upon policy, and that policy must keep watchful eye upon the material prosperity of the citizens of this noble country, the freest, the most just, the most spiritual, the most beautiful fabric of civilization ever known.

In New York the governor was shot from a window as he was driving down the street; the lieutenant-governor who succeeded him was a Schmidt man, and immediately reversed his predecessor's policy. He released the "New York conspirators," ordered out the militia, refused to acknowledge Campbell's election, attempted to draw Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania into a league for the recovery of state rights; but the country showed such plain signs of acquiescence in Campbell's election that the revolt smouldered and died out. Business revived; everybody believed in the Midas touch of that remarkable man; he immediately made friendly overtures to the European nations, dispatched special envoys to every South American state, asking it to

make known any grievances and promising immediate redress. He courted property owners by holding levees open to all whose incomes exceeded a million dollars a year; he offered state aid to multitudinous corporations; he repressed an extensive strike among the laborers of the Combined Radiograph Company on the ground that it interfered with the public utilities of transportation and light, and more and more strengthened the rights of property against the proletariat. He pardoned the Schmidts, who were found guilty of high treason, and rewarded his enemies as well as his friends with positions in high places; it was remarked afterwards that most of his enemies were not confirmed by the Senate, but the nominations helped to break down all immediate opposition.

The next steps were, to reduce meetings of the House from a session every year to one every third year, then every fifth year, while the Senate sat permanently; to regulate the calendar of the Supreme Court in such a way that no causes should be heard except on permission received from the Secretary of the Interior; to limit by law the

right of election to the Senate to persons who should produce a certificate signed by the chairman of the Republican National Committee. Each of these measures was approved by a judgment of the Supreme Court. The last step was begun by the Attorney-General, who filed a bill in the Supreme Court temporarily to enjoin the meeting of both Houses; the case was elaborately argued, and the President invited all bar associations throughout the country to file briefs on either side. The Court decided that the President's obligation "to preserve, support, and defend the Constitution of the United States" was, in the intention of the contracting states, paramount to all other provisions, and that if in his judgment it became necessary to act alone in order to fulfill that duty laid upon him, then it became his duty to certify that fact to his attorney-general, who in his turn should file a bill setting forth that fact, and thereupon the Court had no choice but to enforce the Constitution and enjoin the Senate and House, not only from taking any action, but even from meeting.

Since then, however, both Senate and

House have met regularly. They have authorized stock transactions in each chamber, and the principal business of the country is now transacted there. The President has assumed the titles of Lord Suzerain of South America, High Protector of China, Chief Ruler of the Pacific Archipelago, and has established the Orders of George, of Abraham, of Ulysses, and of William, in honor of Washington, Lincoln, Grant, and McKinley; the members are appointed by him after an examination and sworn inventory of their private fortunes. President Campbell was renominated and reëlected every four years; and since his death his son has succeeded to the party nomination. "The Constitution," as some famous lawyer says, "is like the skin of a great animal, that stretches, expands, and grows with its growth."

3 5134 00148 4985

PS 3537 .E23 N 1908
Sedgwick, Henry Dwight, 1861
-1957.
The new American type

814
S44

GENERAL LOAN COLLECTION

Oregon State Library

Salem

RULES GOVERNING MAIL ORDER LOANS

Books loaned through local public libraries or through traveling libraries are subject to the rules governing them.

No charge for books.—The books circulated by the State Library are free to all citizens of Oregon who will agree to observe the rules of the library and pay transportation charges both ways on books loaned. Shipment is made by mail or express and all prepaid charges must be remitted upon receipt or return of package.

Borrowers.—Adults not previously registered as borrowers should if possible apply through librarian of local public or traveling library, school officers or principal, county school superintendent, member of the Legislature, officers of the local grange or other permanent organization, or give reference to some state officer located in Salem. Reference is not essential to service. Minors must obtain signature of local librarian or school principal.

Number of Volumes.—Any reasonable request for books will be granted if applicant wishes them for study or research work and books are not needed elsewhere.

Time Kept.—Books must be received at the State Library within 28 days from the date of loan. They may be renewed for the same period upon request, as long as needed for study, unless reserved for other borrowers. Date upon which books will be due in the library is given on notice of shipment. Some books will be issued for shorter period and may not be renewed.

Groups of books for home clubs and libraries are loaned for longer periods of from three to six months.

Fines.—A fine of one cent a day must be paid for books kept, without renewal, beyond period for which loan is made. No book will be loaned to anyone who has failed to meet the obligations of borrowers as given in these rules. Notice will be sent when books are five days overdue without having been renewed.

Lost and Injured Books.—Borrowers are held responsible for books and are required to pay for lost and injured volumes. Number of pieces loaned is given on notification postal and borrowers are held responsible for this number unless notice of shortage or error is sent immediately upon receipt of package.

Books must be kept clean, must not be marked and corners of leaves must not be turned down.